PE

PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY

A Pictorial Album Of Electric Railroading

Compiled
By
DONALD DUKE

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Pacific Electric Railway

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PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY

—John Lawson

FOREWORD

Southern California has undergone successive periods of expansion and growth. The tempo varied with each cycle, but through it all, because of the vast area, the Southland's progress was closely linked to transportation. Before the advent of super-highways, the Pacific Electric became the nation's — and the world's — largest suburban electric transportation system. It was undeniably one of the greatest factors contributing to Southern California's development.

Steel rails of the PE extended from the lower reaches of the Sierra Madre Mountains to the shores of the blue Pacific. Other routes blanketed the vast semi-tropical orange groves, while local lines served the metropolitan areas of Hollywood, Long Beach and downtown Los Angeles. The Pacific Electric became an empire of rare scenic beauty and the "Big Red Cars" were known from coast to coast for their comfort and speed.

The history of the Pacific Electric began with Henry E. Huntington, wealthy nephew of Collis P. Huntington, president of the Southern Pacific. Together with friends, he procured valuable lands around Southern California which had not yet been developed or reached by public transportation. In 1901 the Pacific Electric Railway was formed to develop these landholdings.

To begin rail operations the pioneer Los Angeles & Pasadena interurban line was purchased and added to the Pasadena & Mount Lowe Railway. The first interurban line to be built by PE was the Long Beach Line, which opened July 4, 1902. By October 1 of the same year the Pasadena Short Line was opened for operation. The decade following was one of feverish track construction and the years 1902-07 can be classified as the "Golden Era" for the Pacific Electric.

The Monrovia Line opened in 1903, reached Glendora in 1907; the Sierra Madre and Oak Knoll Lines followed in 1906; a line to Covina opened in 1907, reached Pomona in 1911 and 57 miles to San Bernardino in 1914. Lines to Glendale, Newport Beach and San Pedro opened in 1904; to Santa Ana in 1905. The Whittier Line, which opened in 1904, reached Yorba Linda in 1911. Lines to Burbank and Van Nuys were opened in 1911, meanwhile, short connecting lines were added.

As early as 1907 the Pacific Electric network reached most Southern California communities and the PE declared itself "The Greatest Electric Railway System on Earth". The PE Land Company was established to develop the Huntington properties and the growing communities. Huntington attracted land buyers and riders by developing business and recreational facilities at the beaches and along the interurban routes. Everyone rode the PE to work; they flocked aboard the "Big Red Cars" for week-end outings to the beach or mountains.

The Pacific Electric sold all its holdings to the Southern Pacific in 1910. The following year some 63 electric railway lines were united in a great merger to form the Pacific Electric system. Among the larger consolidations were the old PE, the Los Angeles Pacific, the San Bernardino Interurban, the San Bernardino Valley Traction, the Riverside & Arlington and the Redlands Central Railway. The resultant equipment became a melting pot of rail equipment.

Personally conducted trolley tours evolved into an art by PE. The Orange Empire Trolley trip was PE's premier 175-mile tour. One took a specially equipped sightseeing electric car for a journey into the Kingdom of the Orange. Going easterly from Los Angeles, the trip ran into the rich citrus fruit area from Covina to Redlands. The mammoth vineyards could also be seen along the route.

PE also offered three other conducted trips for only a dollar each. The standard bearer of these inexpensive rail rambles was the Balloon Route Trolley trip over the former Los Angeles Pacific. This trip from Los Angeles, toured up-and-coming Hollywood, Santa Monica, Venice and Redondo Beach and back along the balloon shaped track to LA via Culver City.

There was also the Old Mission trip to quaint San Gabriel Mission, Pasadena and Bush Gardens, back to LA via the famous Ostrich Farm. Finally the Triangle Trolley trip provided a delightful seaside jaunt to San Pedro, Long Beach and along the rolling surf to Balboa; doubling back to Huntington Beach and up the inland route to Santa Ana and a fast ride back to Los Angeles.

A tour everyone admitted was the ultimate: a ride to Mount Lowe. PE called this the "Great-

est Mountain Trolley Trip in the World". One took a special interurban from Los Angeles to Rubio Canyon where a narrow-gauge cable car was employed to hoist the sightseer up a 62 per cent grade to Echo Mountain. Here a slim gauge open car made the last lap of the journey to Ye Alpine Tavern on Mount Lowe. For years the Alpine trip was a must for all Southland visitors, that is, until the Tavern burned down in 1936 and marked the demise of the line. By this time trolley touring had become a thing of the past.

The year 1905 saw the opening of the Pacific Electric Building at Sixth and Main. At the time of construction this office building and terminal covered over 400,000 square feet of floor space and was the largest building in Los Angeles. A few years later an extension of the terminal on elevated tracks through the congested district to a junction at grade was completed.

In 1925 the Subway Terminal Building at Fourth and Hill, and a mile-long subway were completed. The subway housed the Glendale-Burbank, San Fernando, Hollywood and Beverly Hills lines, while the ground floor terminal dispatched trains to Venice, Ocean Park and Santa Monica. This greatly improved the Sixth and Main station and considerable street operation.

The PE was determined to keep up with the times. New steel equipment was continually replacing wooden interurbans, faster schedules were introduced, everything possible to provide the best in services for the riding public. As automobile traffic increased, grade crossings were cut through high speed right of way. Tracks in many communities were paved over, forcing the trains into street congestion. Service slowly began to deteriorate.

Plans were made to avoid street operation by means of subways and elevateds, but soon ended up on the junk pile due to the lack of public support. A costly Union Terminal plan for both steam and electric carriers was submitted for vote in 1922. This super program met defeat at the polls and the once-advertised "World's Wonderland Lines" began to relinquish passenger traffic to the automobile despite some grade separations.

The establishment of bus lines as a substitution for unprofitable rail service began in 1917. The first line for replacement was the San Bernardino-Highland-Patton line. Other lines followed in the next few years including the local lines in Long Beach, Pasadena, Santa Monica, Redlands and San Pedro. The Redondo Beach line passed in the late 1930's as well as the Alhambra-San Gabriel-Temple City lines and the Glendale-Burbank line. Service on the high speed 57-mile San Bernardino line was cut back to Covina. Things were black for the "Big Red Cars." Times were changing in Southern California and since PE could not provide proper rapid transit, it had no alternative but to change with the times.

The Motor Transit Company which served local areas and reached as far as Bakersfield, Victorville and San Diego was partially absorbed into the PE system in 1930. By 1936 PE had purchased all interest owned by Greyhound and the lines were wholly merged into the PE bus system. A rehabilitation program was under way by 1939-41 which called for abandonment of the major rail network. This program was interrupted by World War II, when all rail equipment was strained to the limit to handle both passenger and freight traffic.

The all-bus Glendale-Burbank line was returned to rail operation with 30 new PCC streamliners. All possible retired passenger equipment was pressed into service as defense plants and military installations boomed. The family car was left at home due to gas rationing. Interurbans were secured from the abandoned Interurban Electric, a Southern Pacific commute operation in the Bay Area. During 1945, over 109 million passengers were carried on PE rail lines.

The United States Maritime Commission constructed an electrified line from Terminal Island to Island Junction where a connection with the Los Angeles-San Pedro line was made. A fleet of 116 cars operated by Pacific Electric carried an average of 210,00 workers to the shipyards.

During the war the Pacific Electric offered a fine service to Southern California, but at war's end the PE was faced with need for new equipment, track rehabilitation and declining patronage. PE's heritage as a passenger carrying electric interurban line was over. It now was a commercial railroad whose revenues were tons rather than tickets. Every siding, switch and yard indicated that freight was profit and passengers were red ink. PE wanted out, and the sale of all passenger services to the Metropolitan Coach Lines in 1953 brought about this end. Metro services, bus and rail, were taken over by the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit authorities in March of 1958.

Today, Pacific Electric is the third largest originator of freight in California and growing daily. The un-interesting diesel has replaced the box-like electric locomotive and the scores of busy box motor schedules, handling small freight, baggage, Railway Express and U.S. mail were abandoned with the de-electrification program.

It might well be, had the dreams of the Pacific Electric come true, the "Big Red Cars" might yet be seen racing down the middle of the Santa Ana or Hollywood Freeways. Los Angeles and Southern California just grew and spread too fast. The silver rails which developed and built the suburbs were now unwanted. The citizenry wanted the ugly tracks removed for more streets and highways. Now weeds have taken over except for trackage still used for freight. Many oldtimers long for the return of the happy days when all you had to do was to hop a "red car" and reach any Southern California destination with speed — comfort — safety.

It is hoped that this booklet will bring back the days when the "Big Red Cars" flashed along the rolling surf or through the orange groves under the singing trolley. This booklet is not intended to present a comprehensive history, but to give a pictorial review when the PACIFIC ELECTRIC was the "World's Largest Interurban System".

TROLLEY WAYS of OTHER DAYS

—Ira Swett — Magna Collection

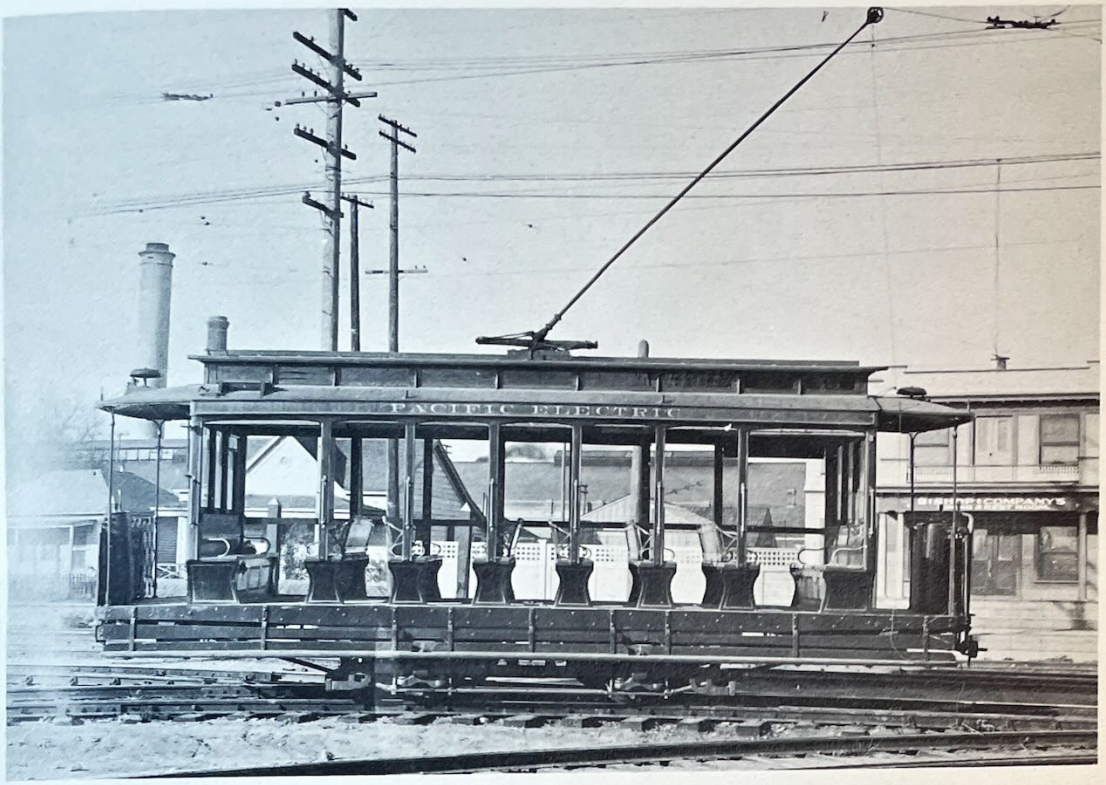
The trolley car was the latest thing, scientific and advanced. Plainly it was going to open up vast new residential areas, with intoxicating possibilities for real-estate profits. This the PE accomplished in a few short years. On the opposite page, a Pasadena car on the old Los Angeles & Pasadena Railway is flagged across the Los Angeles & Salt Lake tracks in 1906. To the left, a former Los Angeles Railway narrow-gauge car on the PE's 3-foot branch off the Temple Street line. *BELOW*: A typical narrow-gauge Pacific Electric interurban used shortly after the turn of the century.

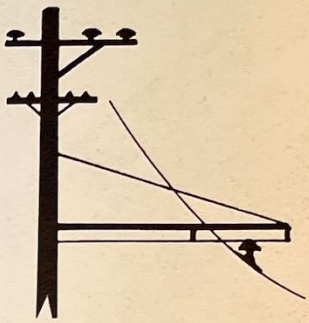
—Ira Swett — Magna Collection

—Donald Duke Collection

The above photograph taken in 1906, shows the Mount Lowe incline cable and the connecting interurban for Los Angeles. The car at the left prepares to cross over at Edendale, on the Glendale line, for a run back to Central Station. Note the whitewashed poles, a means of beautifying the line in the early 1900's. On the opposite page, car 218 has a short lay-over at Watts before returning to 1st & Los Angeles Sts. This 1906 scene shows Watts as a rural station, note line indication on each semaphore blade. *UPPER RIGHT*: An open bench car acquired from the Los Angeles Interurban Railway.

—Ira Swett — Magna Collection





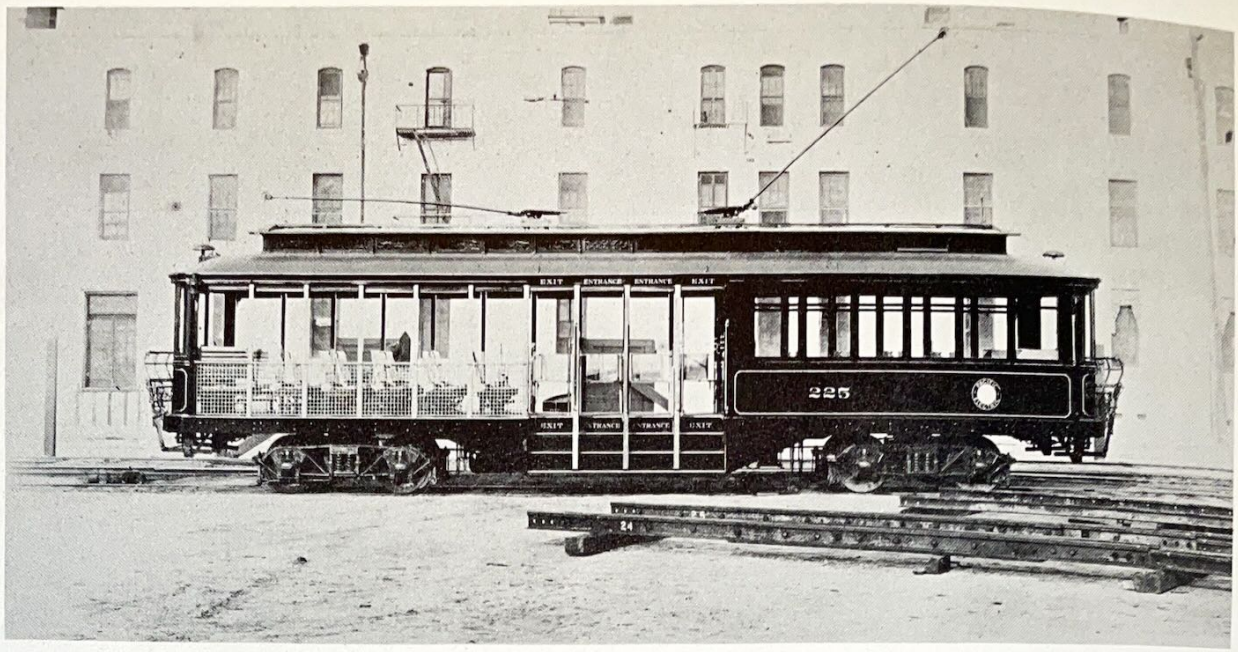
—Donald Duke Collection

—Donald Duke Collection

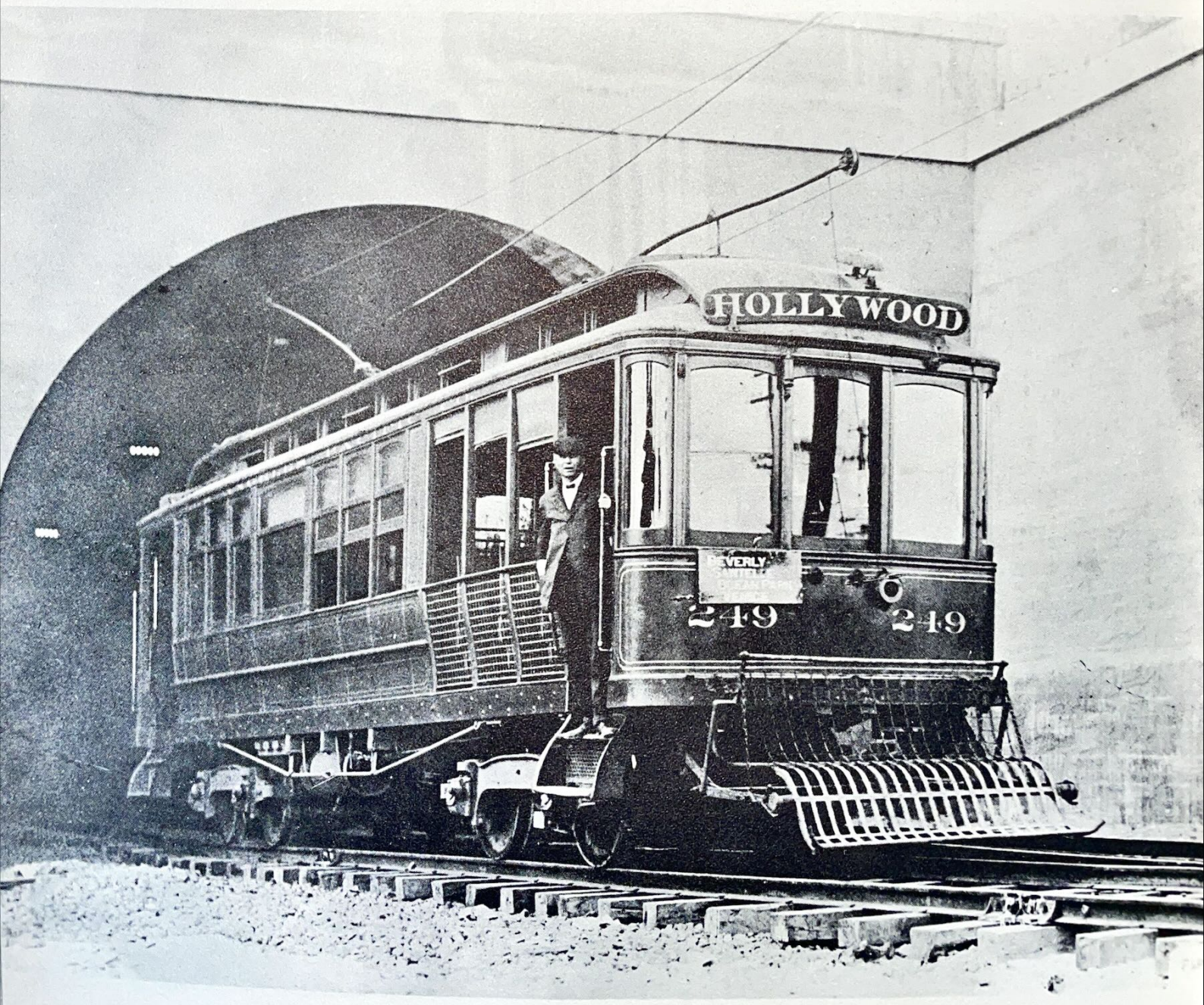
PE 212 crosses over the Southern Pacific tracks at Alhambra Avenue in 1906, on the Pasadena main line. On the opposite page, trolley riders climb aboard car 219 on the opening day of the Long Beach line on July 4, 1902. This is a narrow-gauge car on standard-gauge trucks. *OPPOSITE ABOVE*: A typical PE narrow-gauge California type car on the old Pasadena line. Cars later received standard-gauge trucks and used over the entire system.

—Ira Swett — Magna Collection

—Donald Duke Collection



—Ira Swett — Magna Collection



PE 246 makes a short pause at Slauson Tower to let off a few passengers during 1910. Note the wide open countryside and the strange signal bridge arrangement. The Santa Fe harbor branch is in the immediate foreground. On the opposite page, a historic moment is taking place. The first car through the Hill Street tunnel on September 15, 1909. *ABOVE*: In 1915 PE rebuilt car 225 into its own conception of a center entrance car. The idea was abandoned and 225 was relegated to the San Pedro Outer Harbor line.

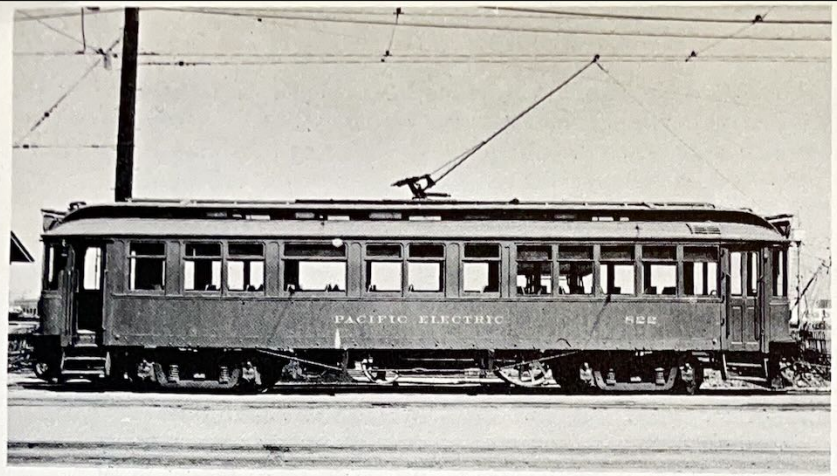
—Donald Duke Collection

—Donald Duke Collection

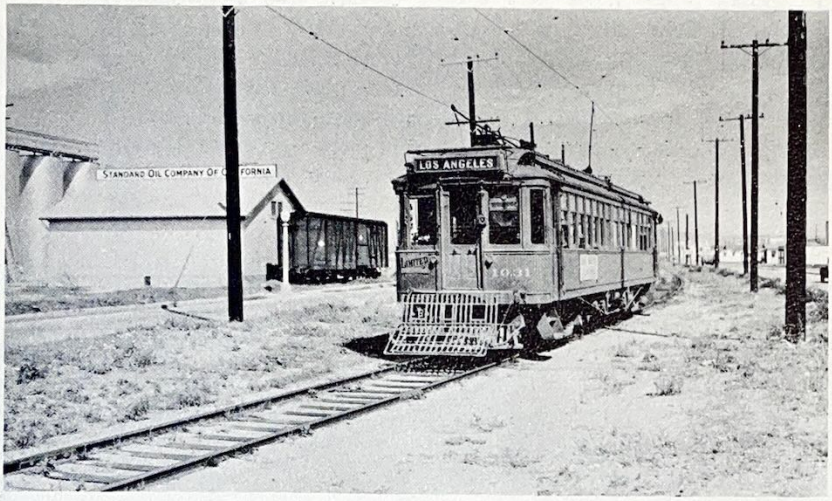
COMING OF THE INTERURBANS

With the building of longer high speed interurban lines, bigger and faster equipment became necessary. Beginning in 1902, the St. Louis Car Co. turned out several open section high speed cars. These were PE's first true interurbans and were an immediate success. Increased patronage brought on repeat orders for bigger and faster cars equipped with couplers and multiple unit controls for train operation. By 1909, the 200, 500 and 800 class cars had developed a fine business for the PE. During 1911, the Los Angeles Pacific was absorbed into the PE system and provided fifty deluxe wooden cars numbered in the 900 series. Designed for sustained running in a proposed Vineyard-Downtown subway, the 900's were used mainly in suburban service. Forty-four cars in the 1000 series were operating by spring 1913. In design they were superior to all the wood cars and could operate on either 600 or 1200 volt trackage. The ten's were fast, but soon outmoded by the new steel cars which began to arrive in 1915. Equipment in this series grew as cars of similar design were handed down from SP's Visalia Electric and Peninsular Railway. By World War II most of the wood cars had yielded to the torch, save the 900's and 1000's which saw action during the emergency. As traffic declined, wood equipment was soon replaced by surplus steel cars. On the page opposite, two 300 class interurbans move a train of homebound commuters through Watts on the way to San Pedro. On this page, a Venice Short line train picks up speed after a short stop at Vineyard Junction.

—Donald Duke



—Charles D. Savage



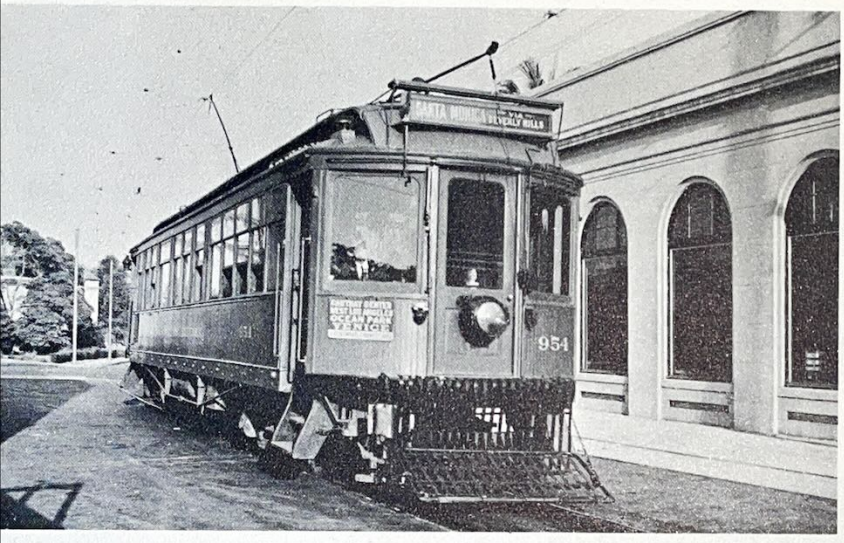
—Charles D. Savage

The two photographs at the left show the similarity between two classes of cars. The 822 awaits a run at San Pedro, while the 1031 leaves Newport Beach for L.A. *BELOW*: In 1907, car 430 prepares to leave Covina for Los Angeles. At this time, Covina was the end of the 600 volt line. *ABOVE*: On the opposite page, a 1910 scene shows a Long Beach flyer rolling through Dominguez Jct. and a crossing over the SP harbor branch at the tower. Note the whitewashed line poles behind the car. *OPPOSITE BELOW*: A train of tens race along the four tracks near Watts station.

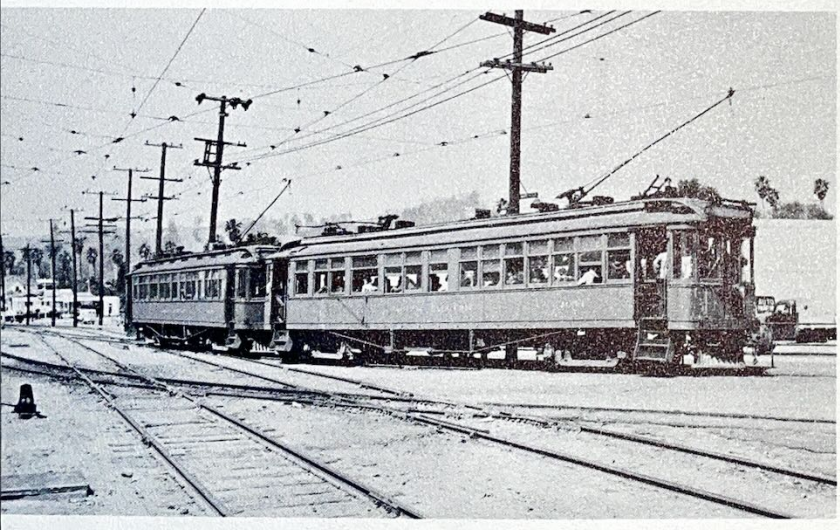
—Donald Duke Collection

—Donald Duke Collection

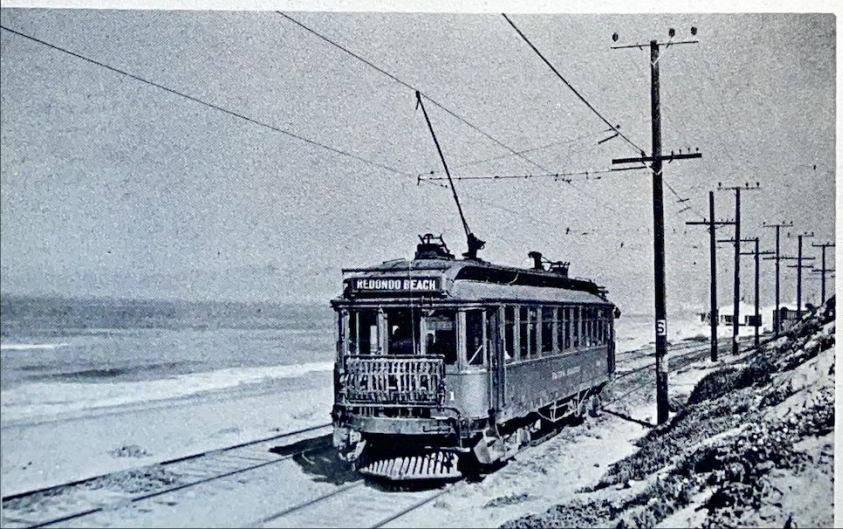
Signal bridges and well ballasted track decorate the four track line at El Sereno, as an Alhambra-San Gabriel train rolls on to Los Angeles.



Car 954 pulls into Beverly Hills station to pick up passengers bound for Ocean Park and Venice.



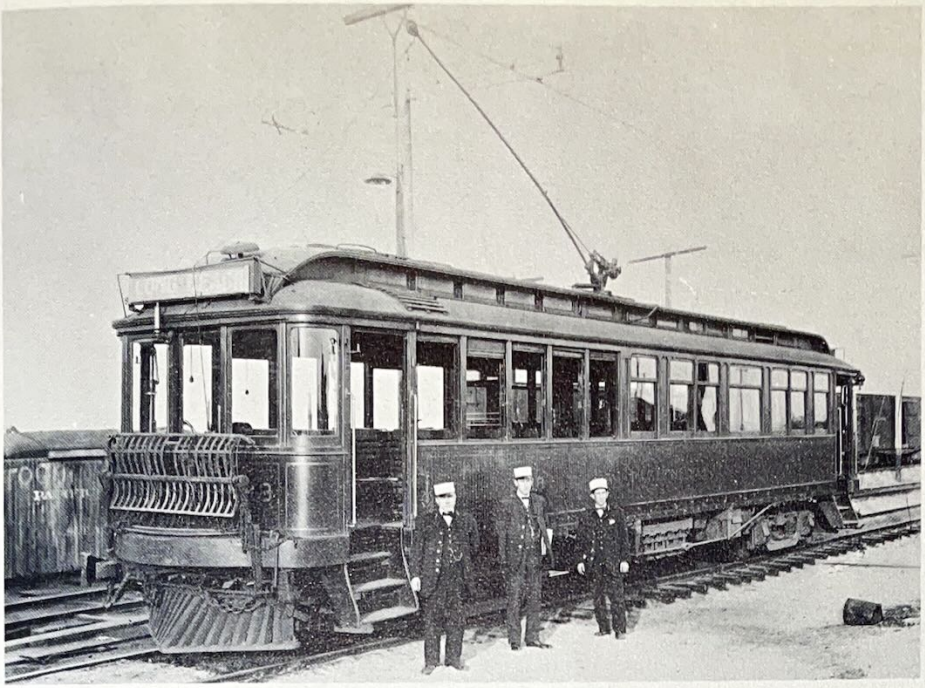
A pair of tens cuts into the main line off the Pasadena Short Line at Oneonta Park, South Pasadena.



PE rails followed the coastline over many route miles. Here 891 pulls into Manhattan Beach on the Redondo line. Opposite page shows a 1911 picture of car 418 and crew. Uniforms were navy blue with snow white hats. Below, a two car Venice Short Line train rolls along Venice Blvd., near Vineyard.

—All Charles D. Savage

—Donald Duke Collectic

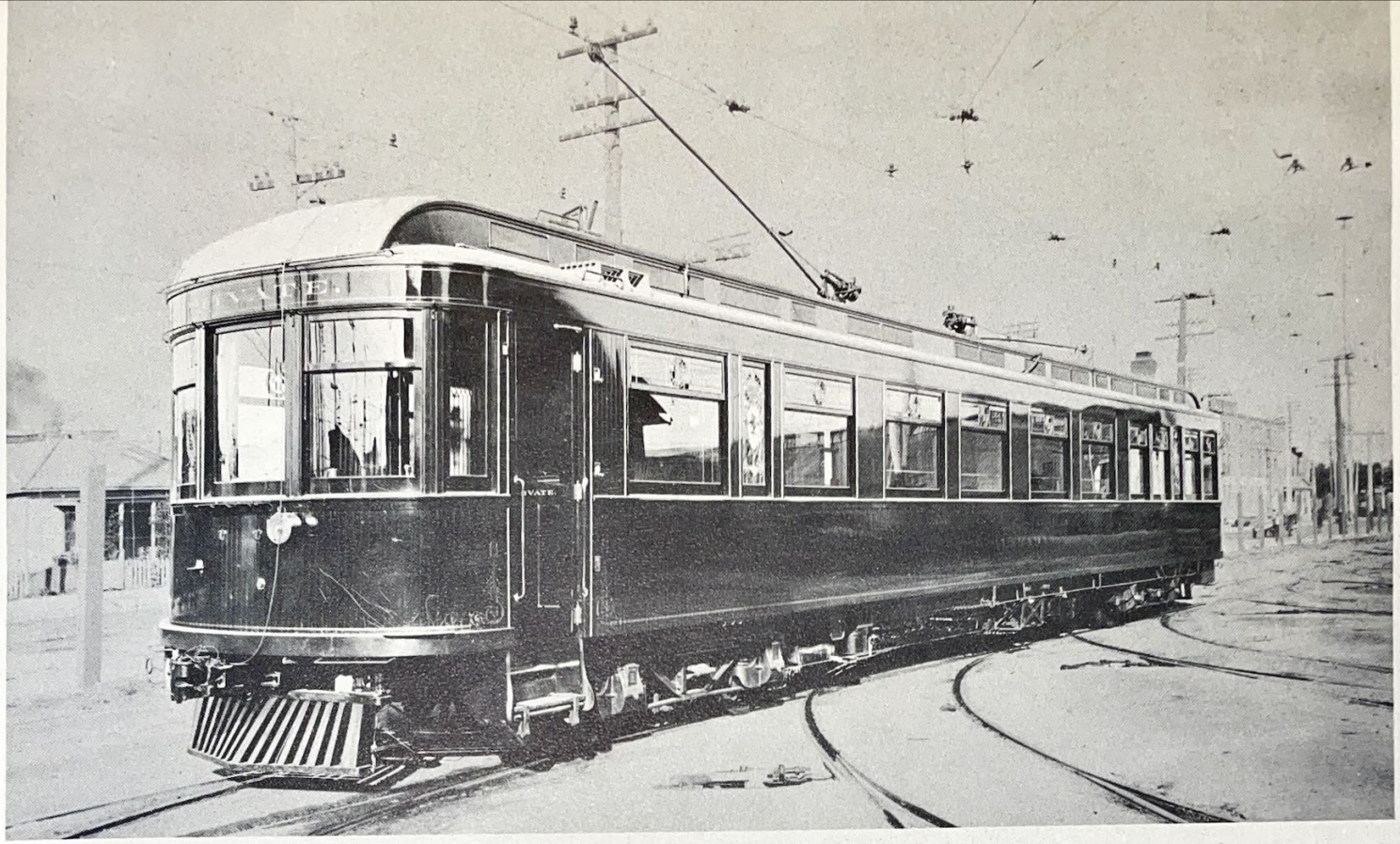


PACIFIC ELECTRIC
COMFORT · SPEED · SAFETY

—Donald Duke

LOS ANGELES
1299
PACIFIC ELECTRIC
SUBWAY TERMINAL
ENTER FRONT
5015

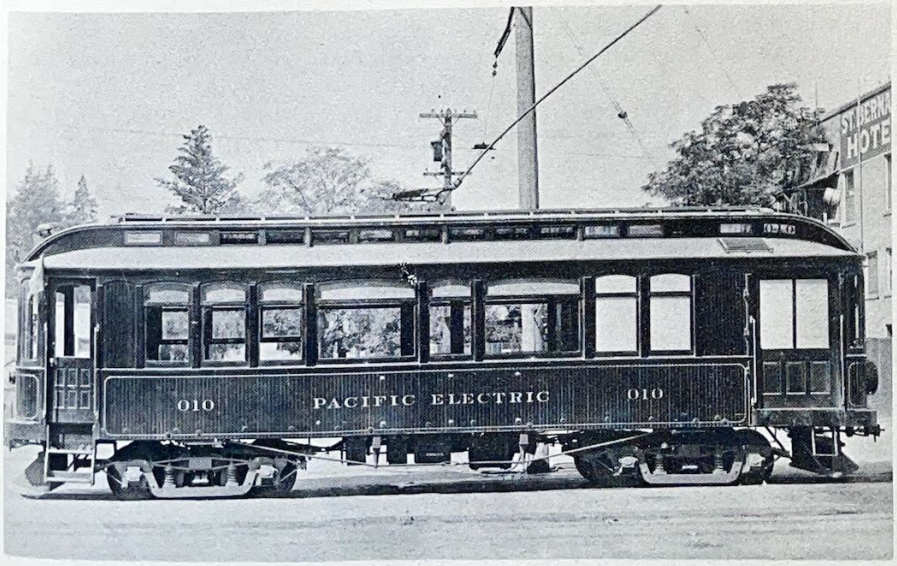
—Donald Duke



—Ira Swett — Magna Collection

For more than a generation, plush cars scorched the rails of PE. Symbolizing this golden era of electric railroading was Henry E. Huntington's luxurious private car, Alabama. Nearly as big as a Pullman, this 63-foot green car contained the facilities of a sleeper, a diner and observation all rolled into one. When the Alabama rolled out of the St. Louis Car Co. in 1905, it was geared with four 200 hp. motors and could be hooked onto any steam train. Unlike most railroad private cars, the Alabama was Huntington's own property. While the Alabama was the most beautiful private electric car ever built, this in no way detracts from the stylish cars PE owned. Nearly twenty-five deluxe cars like the Poppy, El Viento and El Amigo rode the rails on excursions, parlor and private car service. The 1299 was the last varnish and undoubtedly the most modern electric business car. Built by Pullman as a trailer for one of SP's Oregon electric operations, the PE purchased the car and rebuilt it completely with lounge, kitchen and toilet facilities. Not formally named, the car was placed in service in 1930 as the "1299." As a business car it was confined to inspection trips, however during World War II it became club car "Commodore" between Newport Beach and downtown Los Angeles.

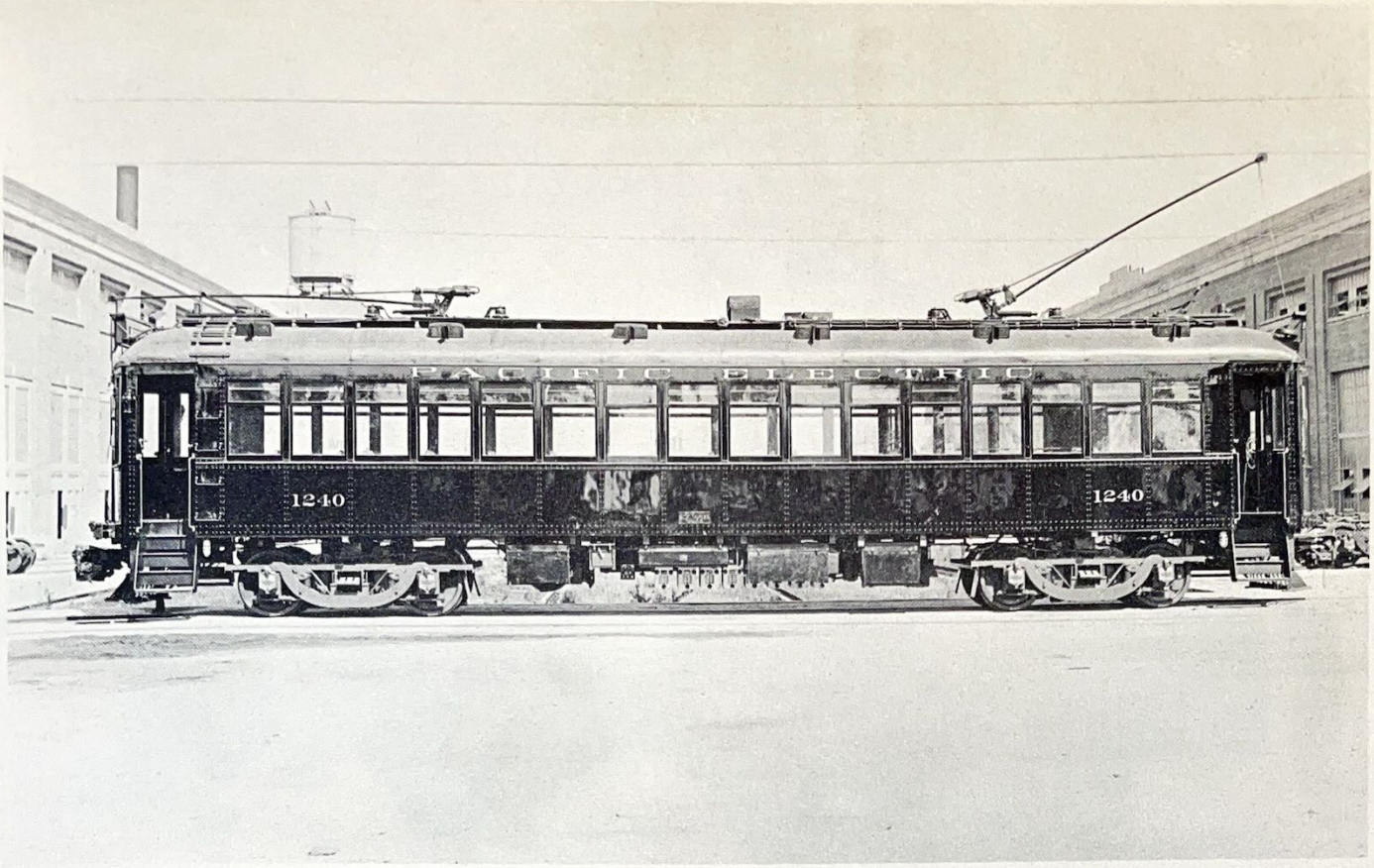
PLUSH CARS



The above photograph is one of the only views ever taken of the famous car "Alabama." Note the words PRIVATE at the cars end. Opposite page shows the 1299 alongside a modern PCC streamliner on an inspection trip to North Glendale. *Left*: The 010, ex-"Mermaid" of the Los Angeles Pacific. PE rebuilt the car in 1911 into a luxurious vehicle to transport President Taft on a visit.

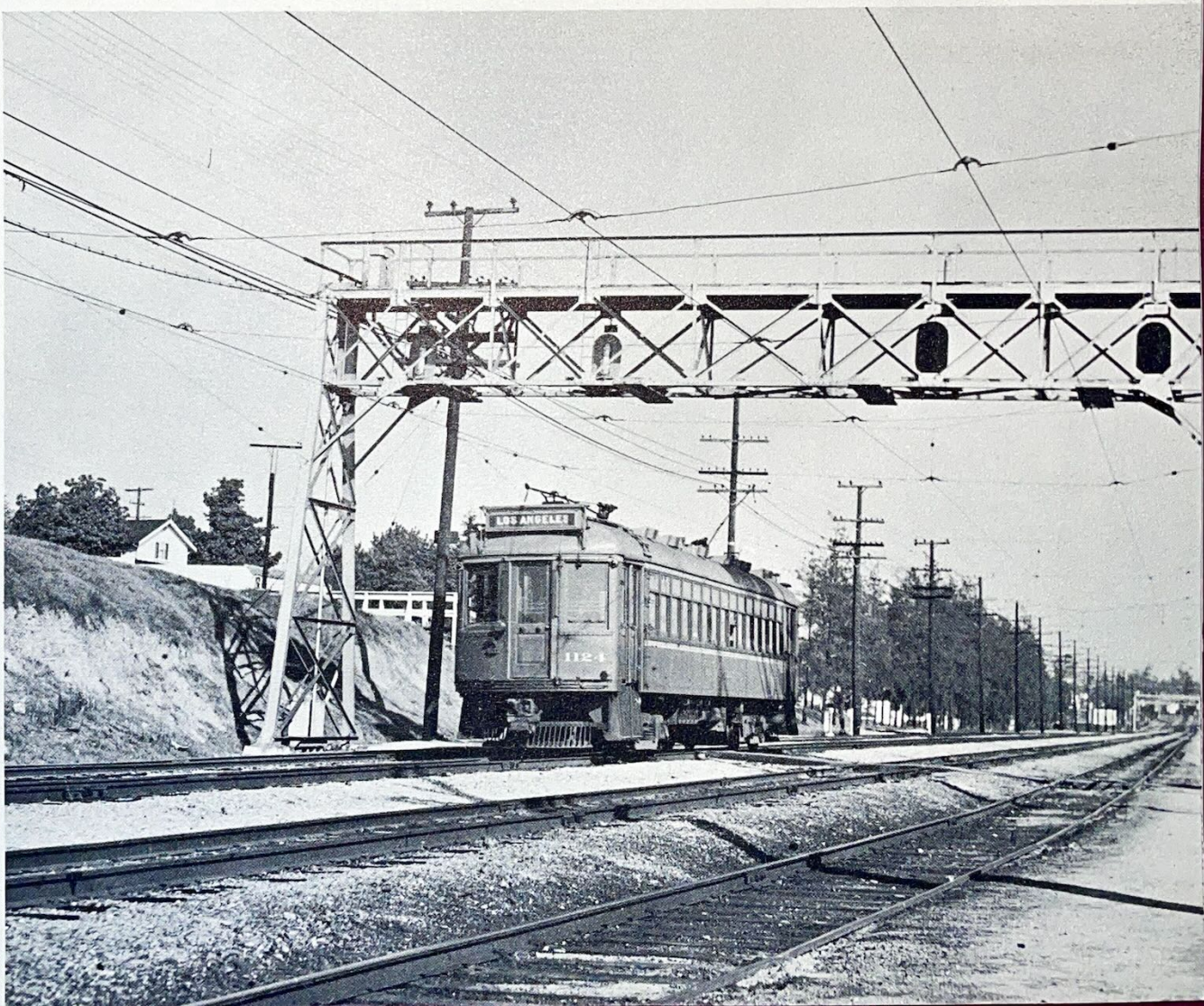
THE BIG RED CARS

Pacific Electric's sixty-three 1200 class steel interurban cars were the ultimate in comfort, speed and appearance—the finest 1200 volt electric cars in the West. Originally designed as wooden cars, the plans were soon nullified after the tragic wreck between two wooden trains at Vineyard in 1913. Several cars were added to the class when the SP abandoned its Oregon electric operations. This group was easily identified by the porthole end windows. Combine cars of the same appearance and construction were assigned to the 1300 class. Fifty more steel cars in the 1100 series were added in 1924 to handle the heavy Northern District traffic. The new cars were modified 1200 class in appearance with double loading doors. Also due to the heavy grades, the cars were slower and equipped for 600 volts. After World War II, all the steel cars were abandoned in favor of the larger, yet slower cars from Southern Pacific's Oakland-Berkeley operations. (*ABOVE*) Catalina Island was the haven for sun lovers and swimmers and six car trains bound for the steamer were not uncommon prior to World War II. On the opposite page, 1240 poses at Torrance Shops after arrival from the builder. (*BELOW*): A Glendora train hits fifty, a mile west of Sierra Vista on the Northern District.



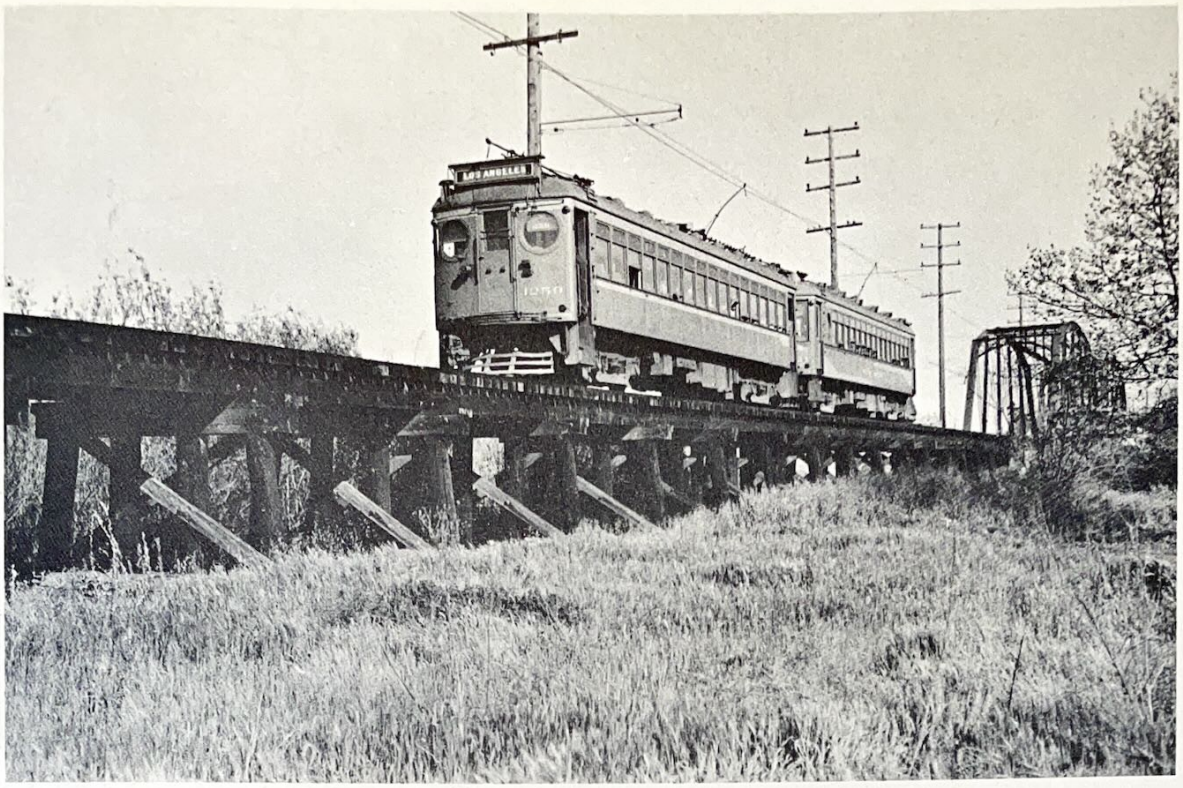
—Donald Duke Collection

—Donald Duke



—All Charles D. Savage

Above is a typical interurban scene on the San Bernardino line. High speed cars left Los Angeles hourly during daylight for the 57 mile run. To the left, the 1144 nears Azuza on its 26 mile jaunt to Glendora. On the opposite page are two views of the equipment acquired from SP's Oregon operations. In the upper photograph, an owl faced train crosses the Santa Ana river bound for downtown L.A. While below, a San Pedro bound train with three cars speeds along at fifty with mail and express for awaiting ships. The 1372 is one of five combines with port hole windows.

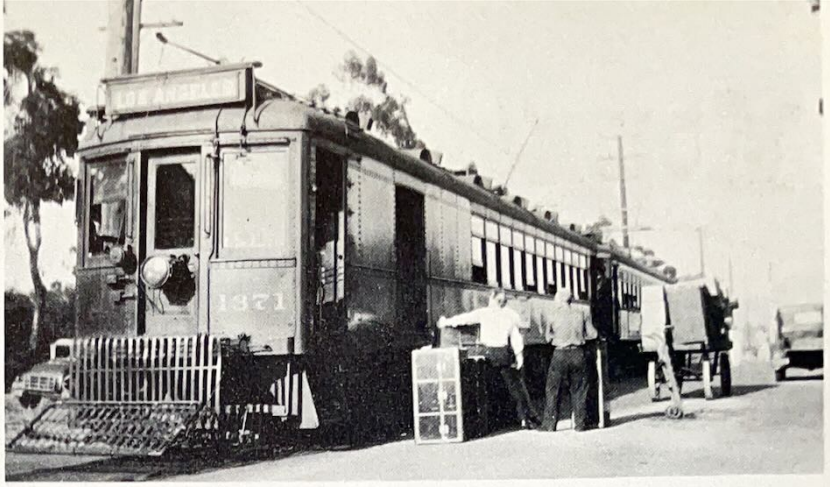


—All Donald Duke

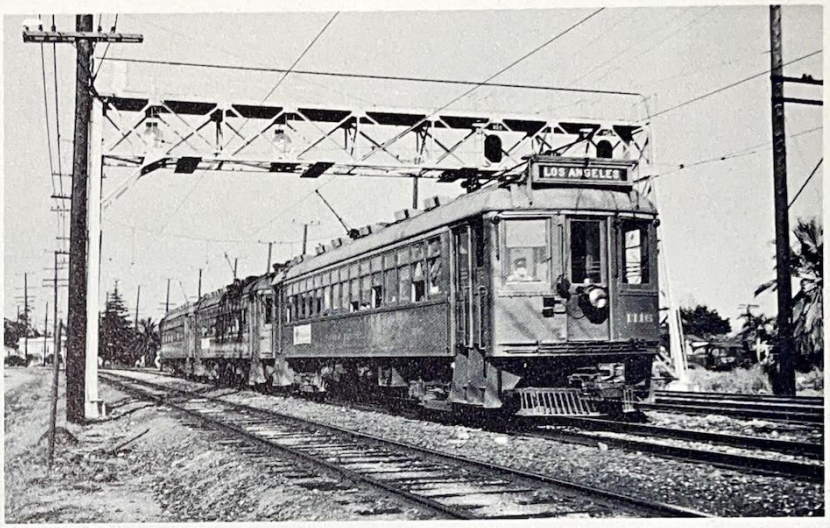
During the 1939-40 rehabilitation program, cars 1216-21 with toilet facilities, were completely rebuilt with plush coach seats and new interiors for San Bernardino service. To the right, 1218 crosses the Santa Ana River. (*BELOW*) A Pasadena Oak Knoll car passing through a high class residential section.

—All Donald Duke

In this 1935 scene, combine 1371 accepts Los Angeles-bound baggage at Claremont, on the San Bernardino line.

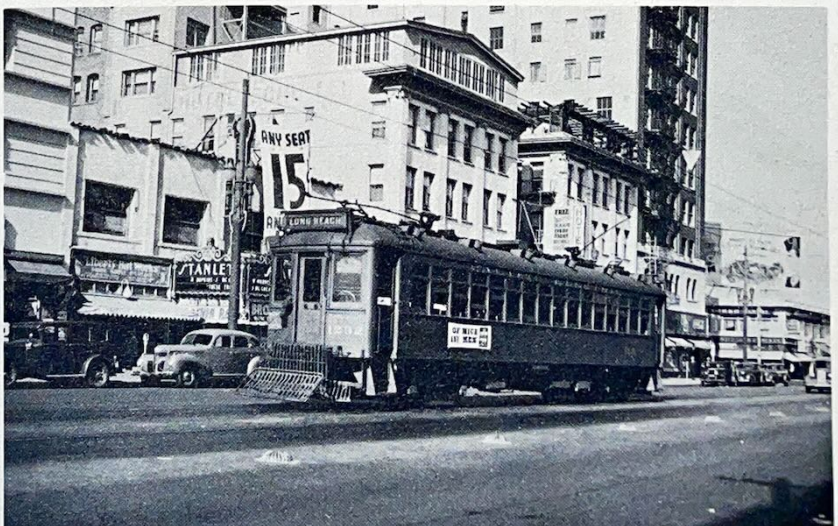


A three-car commute train slows for Sierra Vista station on the four track section of the Northern District.



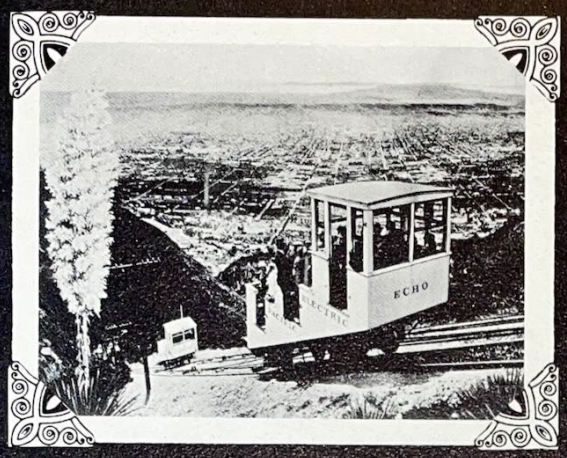
A single car gets under way at El Molino Jct. in San Marino. Note Pasadena Oak Knoll car in the distance.

Street running, signals and automobile traffic slow this train on American Ave. in Long Beach.



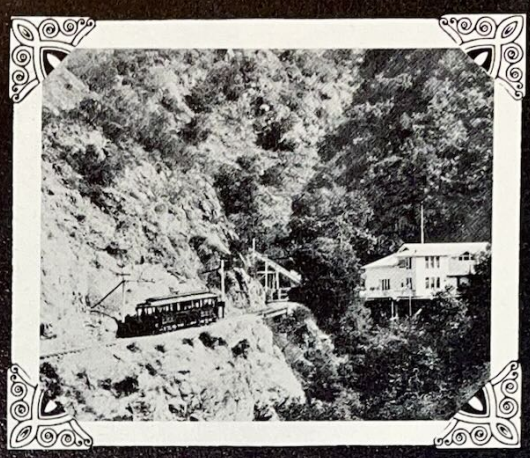
Mount Lowe Railway

A Page from a Mount Lowe Album



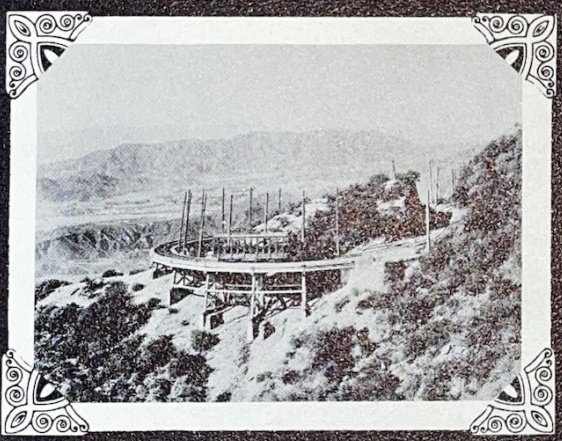
THE GREAT INCLINE

A magnificent view of Southern California from 3,500 up on Echo Mountain.



RUBIO PAVILION

Where the trolley meets the Great Incline.



THE CIRCULAR BRIDGE

Engineering wonder on the Alpine Division.

YE ALPINE TAVERN

End of the line - 1,100 feet below the top of Mount Lowe.

Once world famous and the most popular tourist attraction in Southern California, now a forgotten memory. The Mount Lowe rail trip offered one of the world's most spectacular and breathtaking rides. Trolleys left Pasadena frequently and headed for the mountains, up a tight canyon to Rubio. Here one transferred from trolley to cable and hoisted 3,000 feet to the top of Echo Mountain on a 62 percent grade. A spectacular view of Southern California could be observed on the way up. Echo Mountain hosted a fine hotel, dining and observatory, plus a powerful searchlight which could be seen for many miles at sea. For those with a good heart, the trip unfolded more spectacular scenery as the narrow gauge open trolley followed the natural contour over 18 trestles and around 127 curves before it reached Alpine Tavern, the end of the line. This luxury resort was equipped for every pleasure. The best in accomodations, cuisine, sport and hike. The final chapter was written for the Mount Lowe Railway, when the tavern burned to the ground in the summer of 1936. Abandoned right of way and ruins monument the greatest mountain trolley ride in the world.

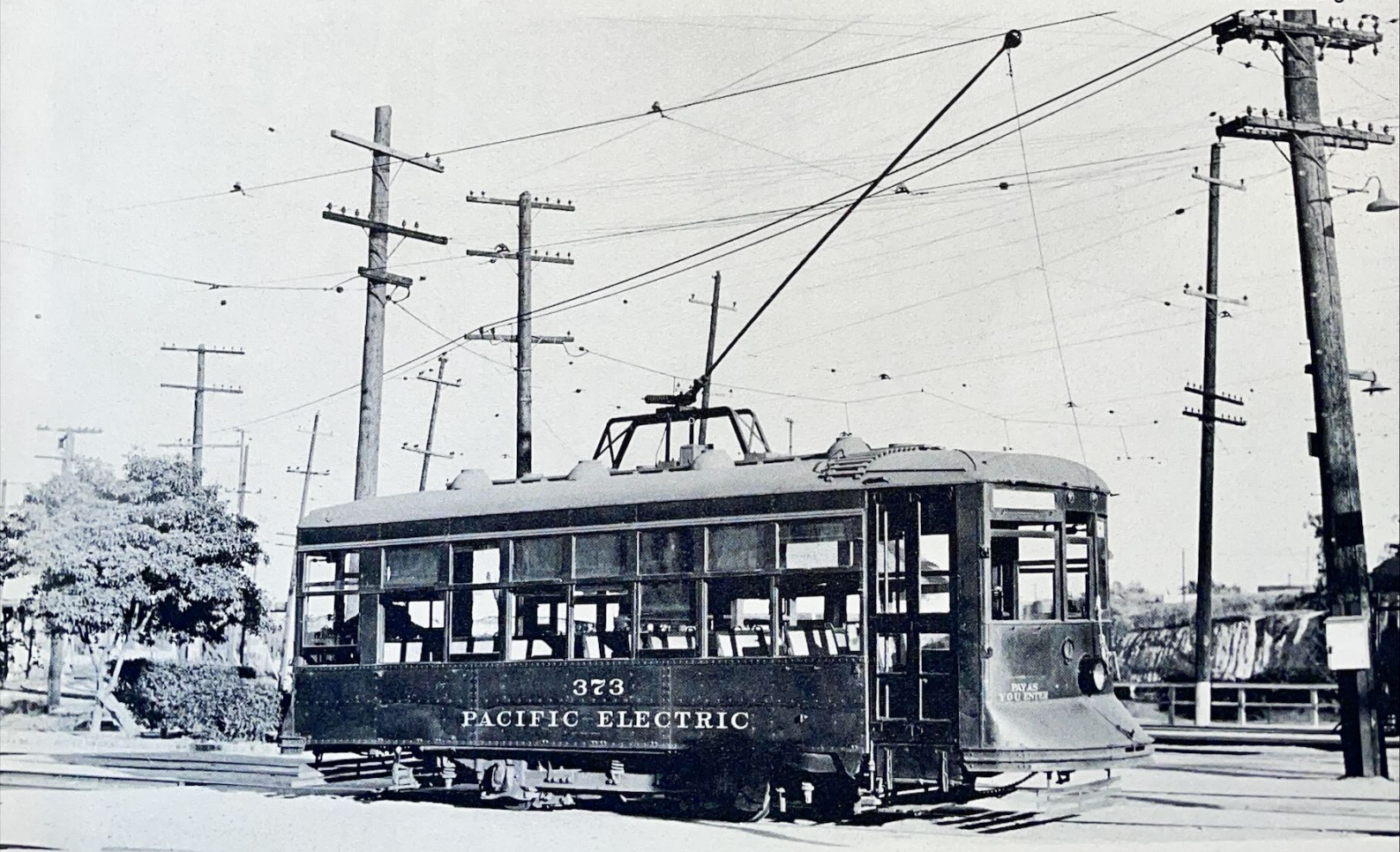
PACIFIC ELECTRIC
123

City and Suburban

From the very start, the Pacific Electric operated local city lines in conjunction with interurban service. The automobile soon decreased this local traffic and as an economy measure, the Birney car was installed on many lines. For heavier city traffic, a double-truck Birney type car was obtained. As a replacement for the heavy wooden cars on suburban lines, the PE purchased 160 all steel center entrance cars between 1922-28. Built originally for the Hollywood service, these cars in the 600-700 series could operate in trains up to three cars and before long dominated the local and suburban lines. During the 1939 modernization program, all cars of this type were completely rebuilt and lasted until the end of PE passenger service. On the left, two trains pass at the mouth of the subway bore. The 5100 class numbers are the 700's rebuilt as one-man cars. (*RIGHT*) LA. bound Van Nuys car starts across the Los Angeles river bridge in the San Fernando Valley. A Birney (*Below*) waits at Echandia Jct. to begin its 1000-foot shuttle to General Hospital. Shortest line on the PE system.

—Donald Duke

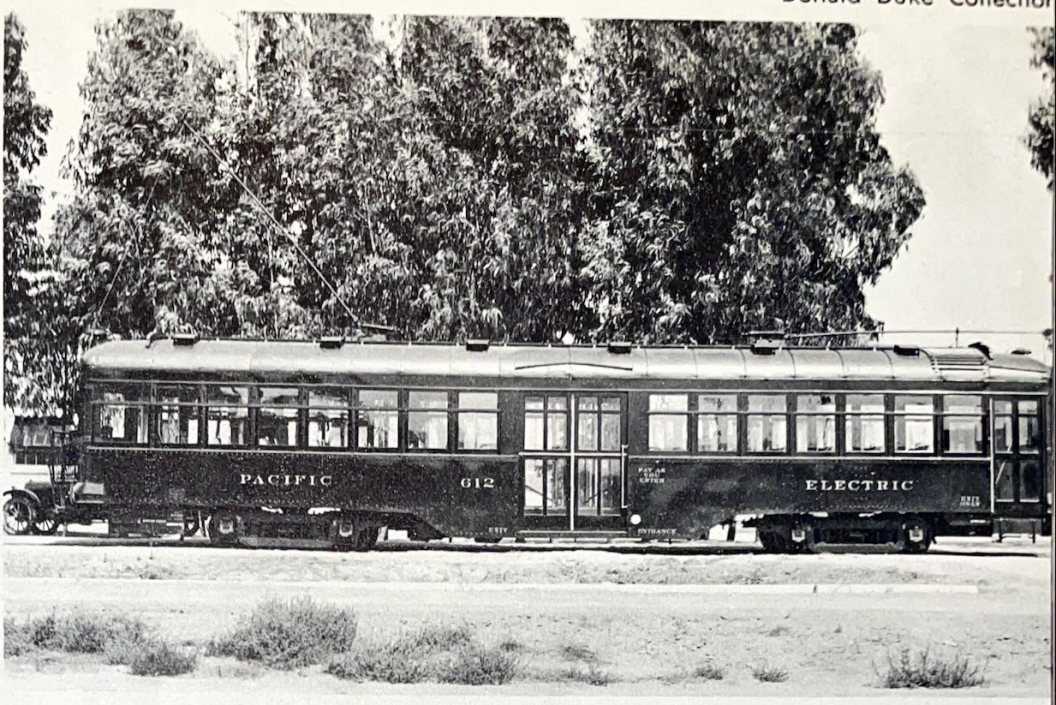
—R. H. Kindig



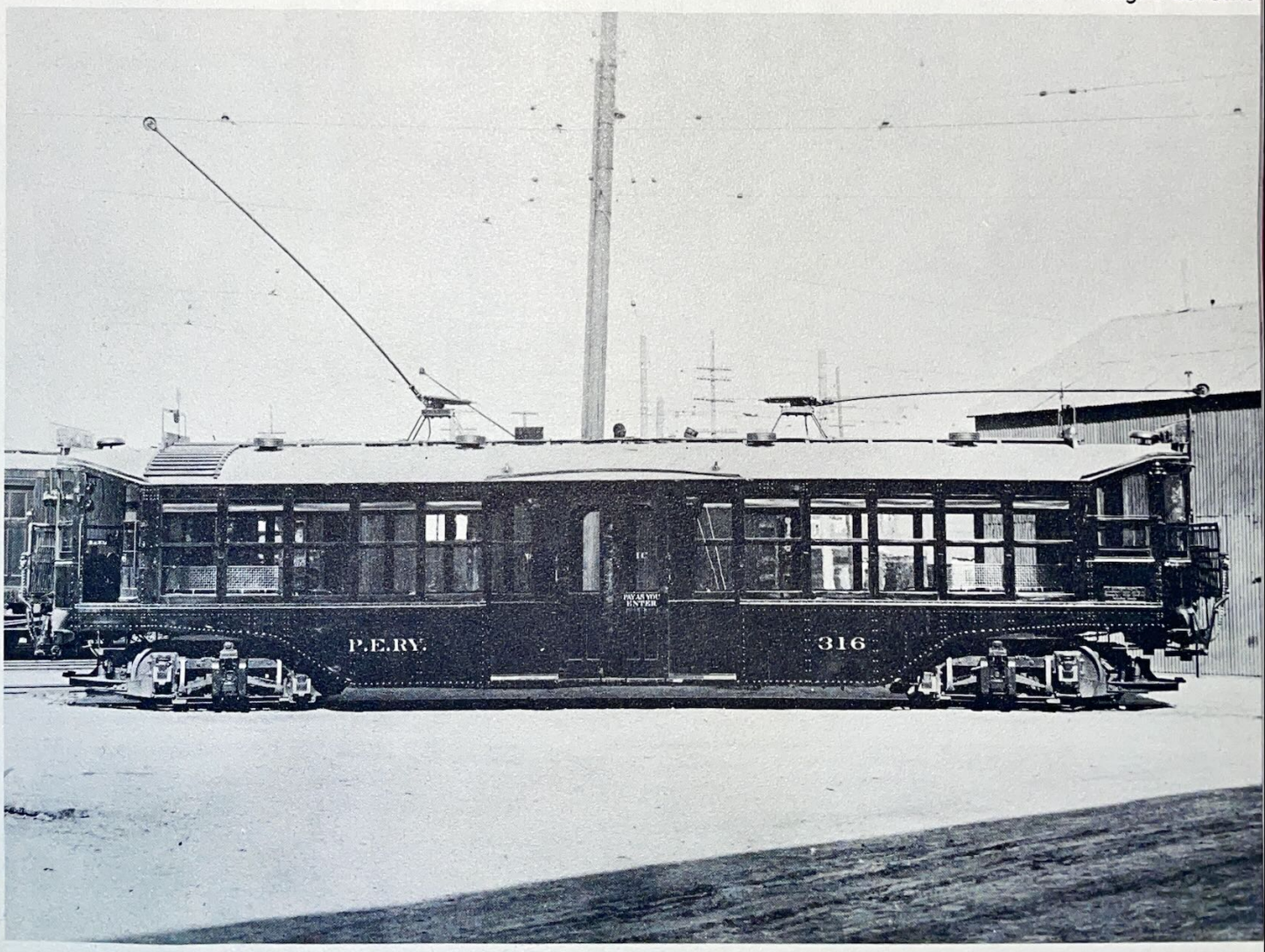
726
PACIFIC
726
ELECTRIC

Eclipse fenders shrouded all PE equipment until World War II. On the opposite page, a Sierra Vista-bound cars rolls along the Southern District four track line (*RIGHT*) The 612 poses for the camera in 1922 after its arrival from the St. Louis Car Company. *BELOW*: PE had 31 of these "Broadway Battleships" which were used on local lines. So called, because they were designed for New York's famous thoroughfare.

—Donald Duke Collection

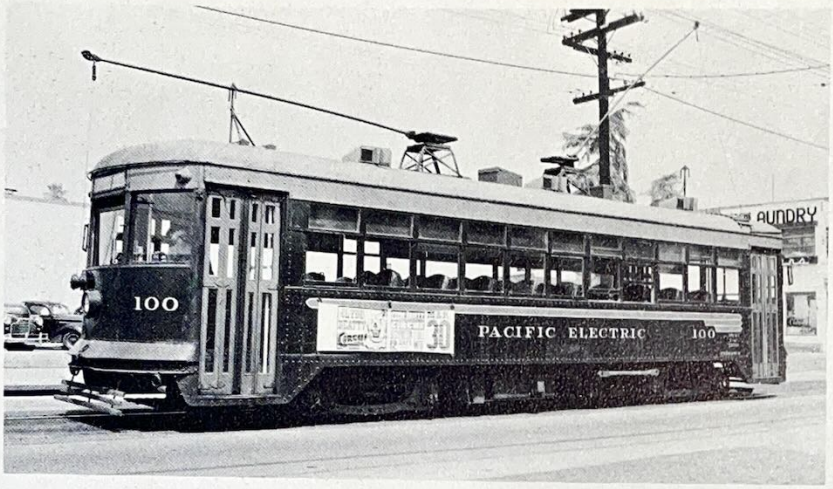


—Ira Swett — Magna Collection



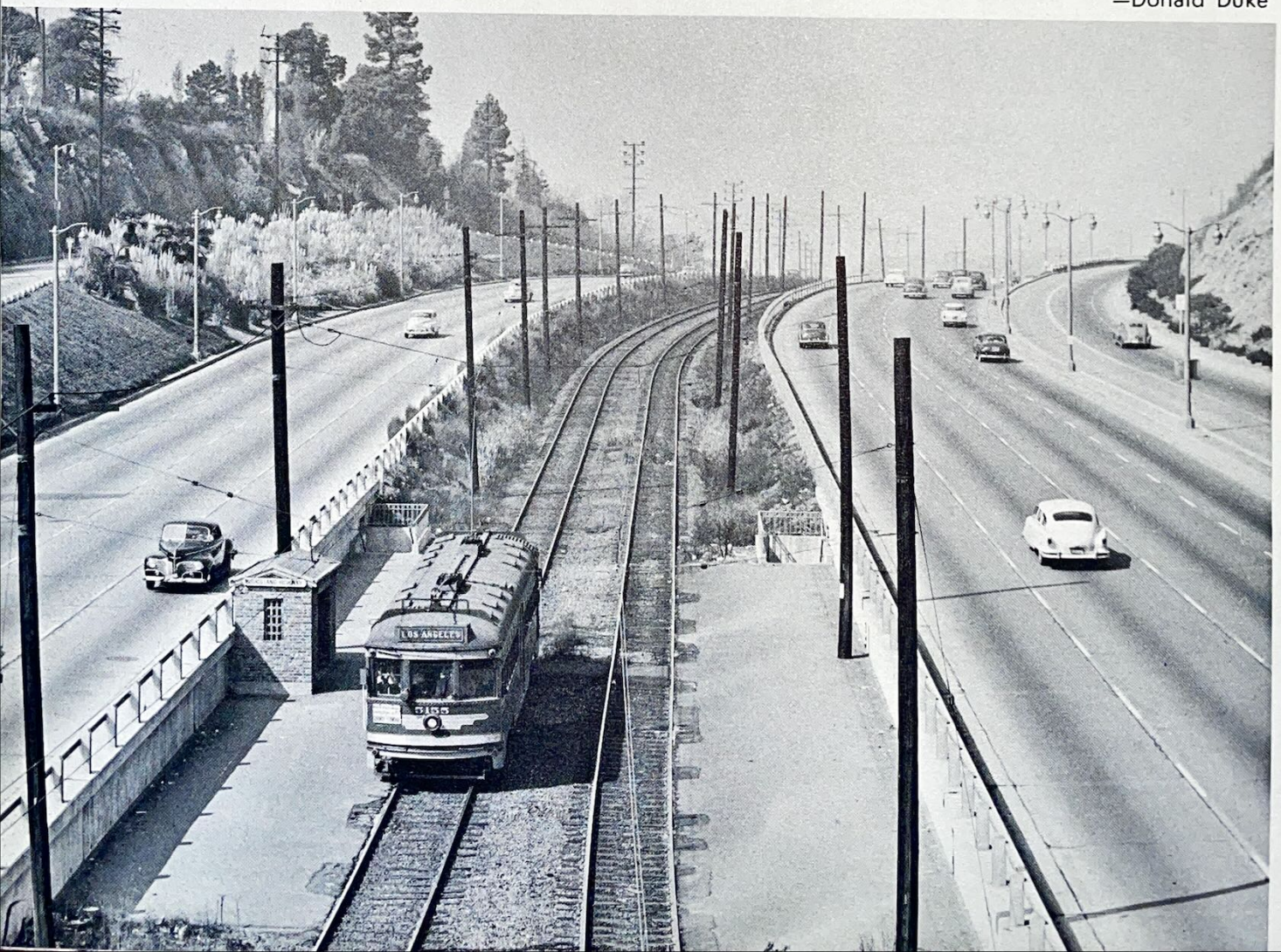
—Charles D. Savage

—Donald Duke



Cahuenga Pass was the key to all the San Fernando Valley lines. During the years the tracks were moved about, but soon steel and cement surrounded the tracks in between super highways — rapid transit style (*UPPER LEFT*) The 657 stands alongside the Riverside station in 1938, ready to depart on its local run to Arlington. Fourteen cars in the 100 class (*Opposite*) were built for Long Beach and San Bernardino local service, but were switched to the Echo Park Ave. line in Los Angeles.

—Donald Duke



TERMINALS

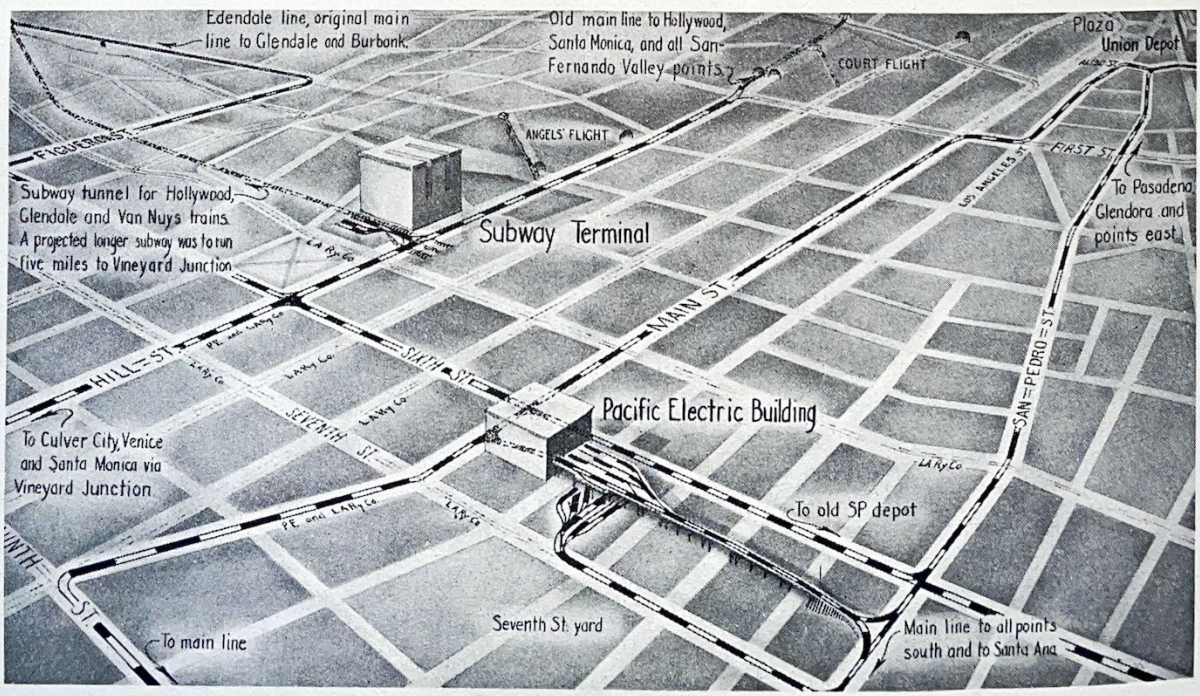
—Pacific Electric Railway

The year 1905 saw the opening of PE's $600,000 headquarters and terminal at 6th & Main Sts. The ground floor of this skyscraper housed the station with double through tracks at the south side. With the increased volume of trains, a stub elevated terminal was built in 1916. This took many of the trains off the street in the downtown area and permitted longer trains. During 1945-6 the waiting room received a new marble interior and streamlined facilities. As the bus replaced many rail lines, ramps and storage facilities took over many of the rail facilities. A new station was built in 1925 upon the site of the old Hill St. station. The idea of a subway was revived again and an attempt to rapid transit the terminal end of the Western District resulted in the $3,500,000 Subway Terminal Building. This 12-story structure contained a mile-long double track tube and an underground station. A surface terminal constructed at the south side housed many of the beach line trains. Preceding page shows PE's 6th & Main St. terminal looking north on Main Street. A Pasadena Oak Knoll car swings off onto Main. Note entrance to ground terminal at lower right.

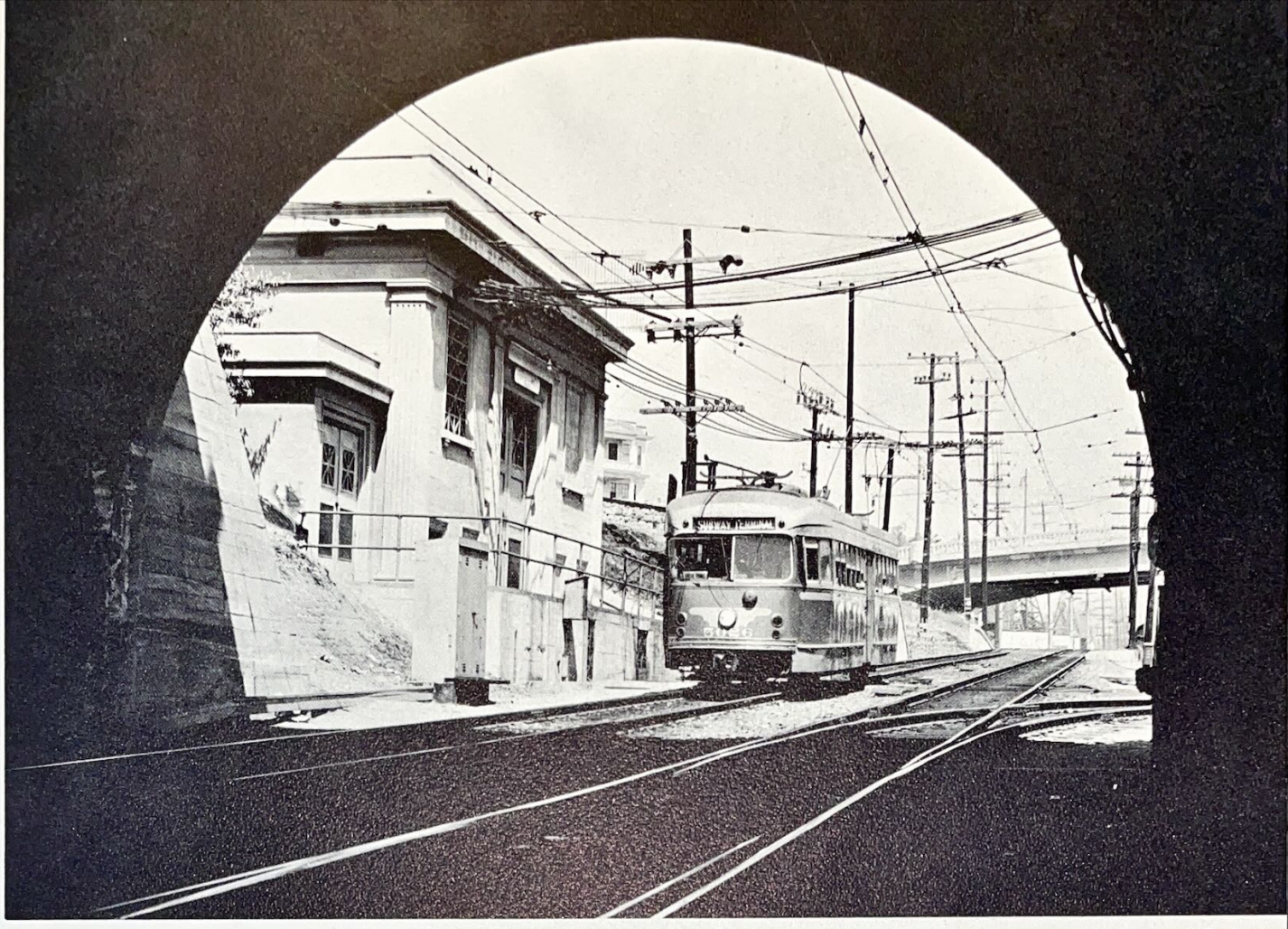
On a usual Sunday morning (*Upper Left*), the elevated terminal tracks at 6th & Main are bare of commuter activity; however New Year's Rose Parade trains operate so close, cars are lined up for blocks awaiting loading trackage. *LOWER LEFT*: A pictorial pose showing PE's standard interurban equipment after 1951. *LOWER*: A train of 1200's pulls into the terminal after a fast ride from Santa Ana.

—Donald Duk

—Security First National Bank — Los Angeles

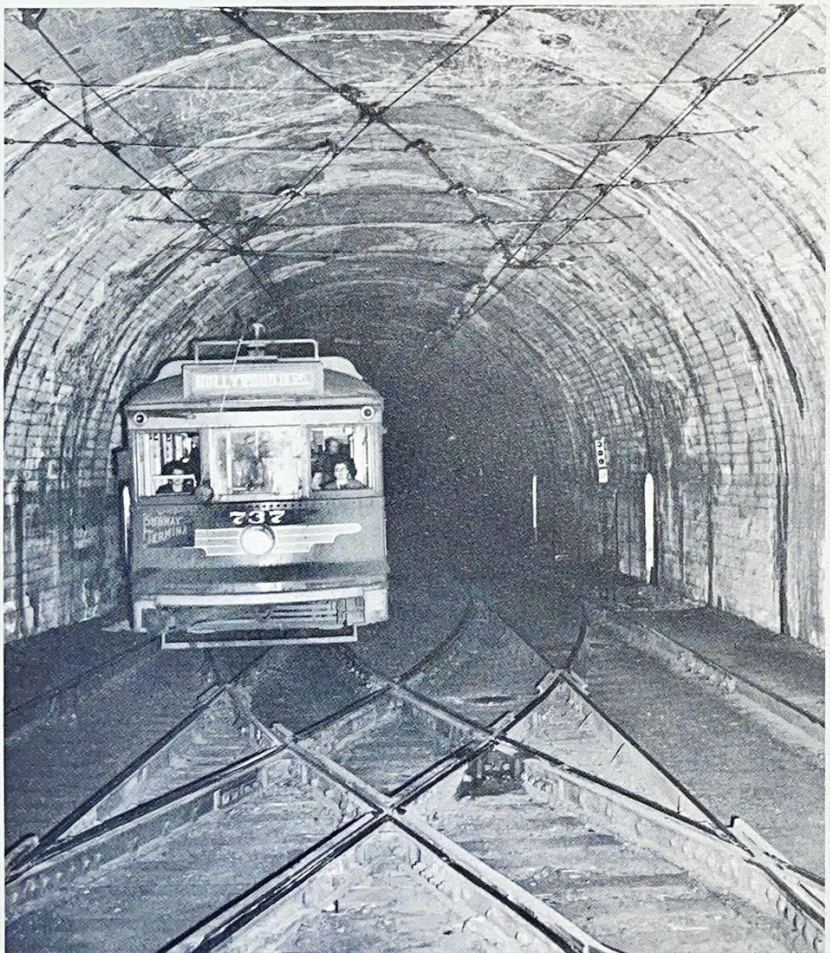

Edendale line, original main line to Glendale and Burbank.
Old main line to Hollywood, Santa Monica, and all San Fernando Valley points.
Plaza Union Depot
COURT FLIGHT
ANGELS' FLIGHT
FIGUEROA
Subway tunnel for Hollywood, Glendale and Van Nuys trains. A projected longer subway was to run five miles to Vineyard Junction
Subway Terminal
FIRST ST.
To Pasadena, Glendora and points east
LOS ANGELES ST.
MAIN ST.
HILL ST.
SIXTH ST.
SEVENTH ST.
SAN PEDRO ST.
Pacific Electric Building
To Culver City, Venice and Santa Monica via Vineyard Junction
To old SP depot
To main line
Seventh St. yard
Main line to all points south and to Santa Ana

—Courtesy of Trains Magazine



—Donald Duke

—Pacific Electric Railway



The mission style Hill Street station was acquired with the merger of the Los Angeles Pacific and PE. This small station was razed in 1925 to make room for the Subway Terminal Building. The photograph in the upper left, shows the station as it looked in 1922. The map at the lower left, gives one a good placement of both downtown terminals and the mile long bore. The subway saved many minutes of street traffic in the downtown area. The Glendale car above, passes the Toluca Sub as it enters the subway, while to the left, a Hollywood Blvd. car takes a switch into terminal tracks.

—Donald Duke

STREAMLINERS

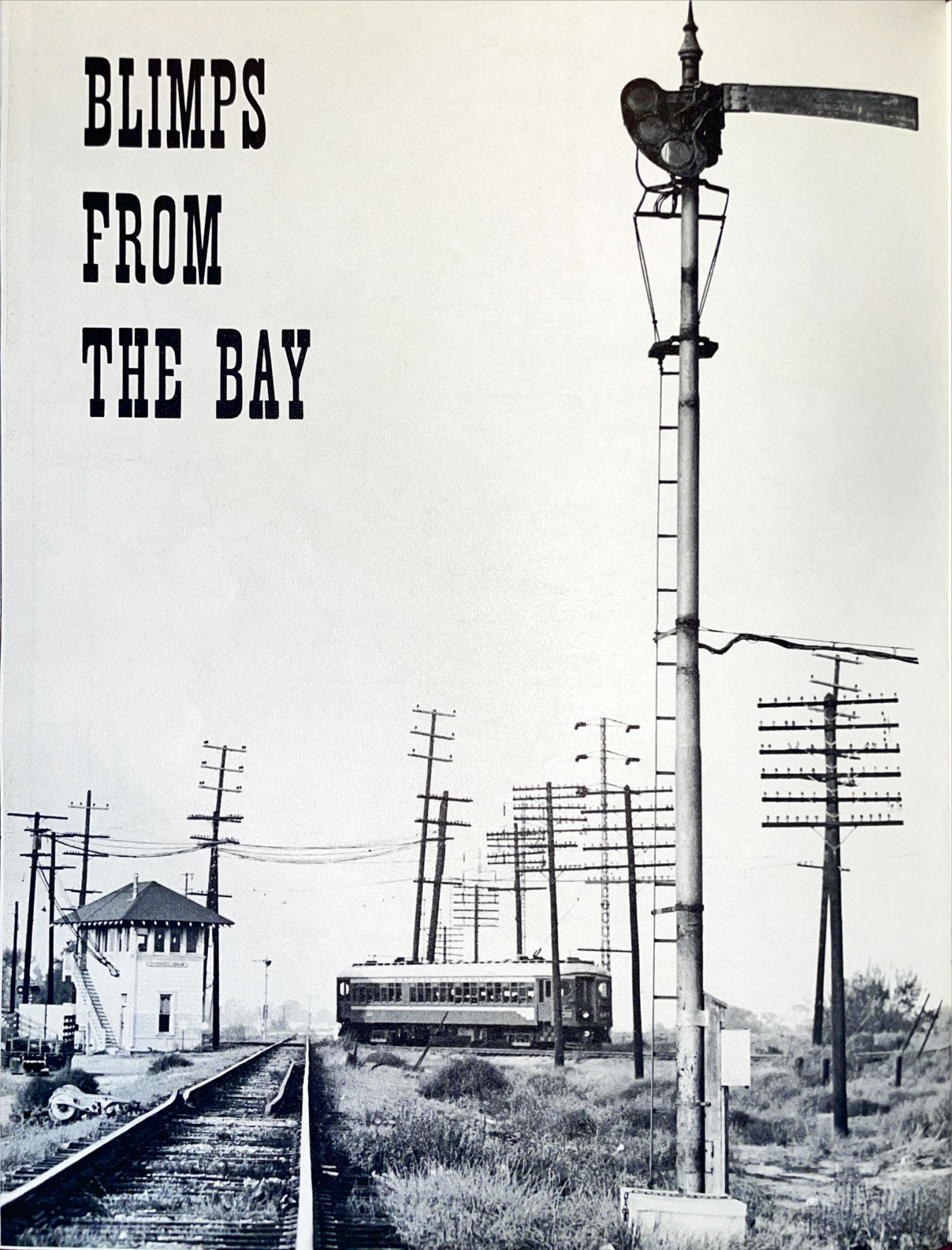
—Donald Duke

With restoration of all-rail service to Glendale - Burbank on November 24, 1940, thirty streamliners built by Pullman Standard were placed in service. These cars were the longest PCC type car built, and were the first such cars to be equipped with multiple-unit control and couplers. The new equipment received great ovation from patrons of the line. The 5000's were tried on the Venice Short Line, but returned to Glendale service because of rough track. The cars remained on the Glendale line until abandonment. *Opposite*: A Los Angeles - bound streamliner crosses the Fletcher Avenue viaduct on Glendale - Burbank line. (*Shown on this page*) An outbound Glendale car emerges from the subway, while above, a PCC ascends the grade toward Los Angeles after a pause at Montesano sub-station.

—Donald Duke

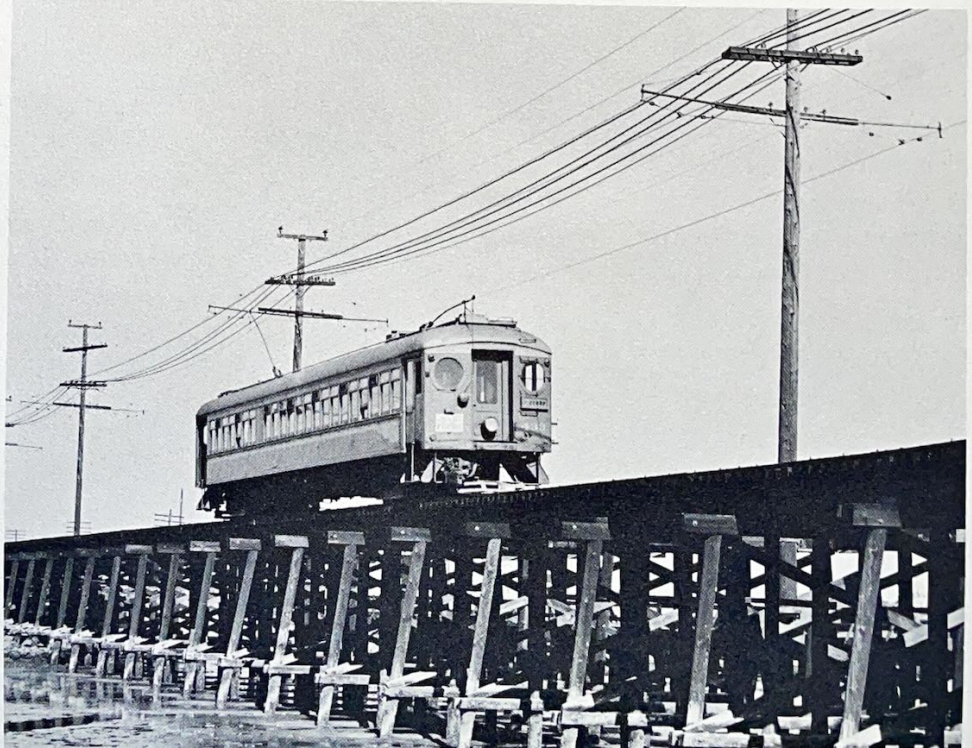
THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT
OF LOS ANGELES
PACIFIC ELECTRIC
RAILWAY
1925
CORPORATE AREA OF LOS ANGELES
CORPORATE AREAS OF OTHER MUNICIPALITIES
LOS ANGELES RAILWAY LINES
PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY LINES
STEAM RAILROAD LINES
SCALE 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 MILES
SAN FERNANDO VALLEY
PACIFIC OCEAN
SAN BERNARDINO CO.
RIVERSIDE CO.
ORANGE CO.
SAN FERNANDO
VAN NUYS
LANKERSHIM
BURBANK
GLENDALE
HOLLYWOOD
EDENDALE
SHERMAN
BEVERLY HILLS
SHERMAN JCT.
HIGHLAND AVE
SOLDIERS HOME
VINEYARD
CULVER JCT.
SANTA MONICA
OCEAN PARK
VENICE
CULVER CITY
PLAYA DEL REY
INGLEWOOD
WATTS
SOUTH LOS ANGELES
HAWTHORNE
EL SEGUNDO
MANHATTAN BEACH
HERMOSA BEACH
REDONDO BEACH
TORRANCE
GARDENA
COMPTON
DOMINGUEZ JUNCTION
NORTH LONG BEACH
WILMINGTON
SAN PEDRO
LOS ANGELES HARBOR
LONG BEACH
SIGNAL HILL
EAST LONG BEACH
ALAMITOS HEIGHTS
ALAMITOS BAY
SEAL BEACH
HUNTINGTON PARK
SOUTH GATE
VERNON
MAYWOOD
MONTEBELLO
MONTEREY PARK
ALHAMBRA
SAN GABRIEL
EL MONTE
LOS NIETOS
WHITTIER
LA HABRA
BREA
FULLERTON
ARTESIA
ANAHEIM
WEST ANAHEIM
STANTON
MARLBORO
ORANGE
SANTA ANA
ALTADENA
PASADENA
ARCADIA
SAN MARINO
EL MONTE
GLENDORA
AZUSA
COVINA
SAN DIMAS
CLAREMONT
UPLAND
ONTARIO
POMONA
CHINO
SAN ANTONIO HEIGHTS
MT LOWE
ALPINE TAVERN
MT WILSON
STRAWBERRY PEAK
1st Angeles River
Rio Hondo
San Gabriel River
Santa Ana River
Santiago Creek
10 MI
6 MI
2 MI

BLIMPS FROM THE BAY



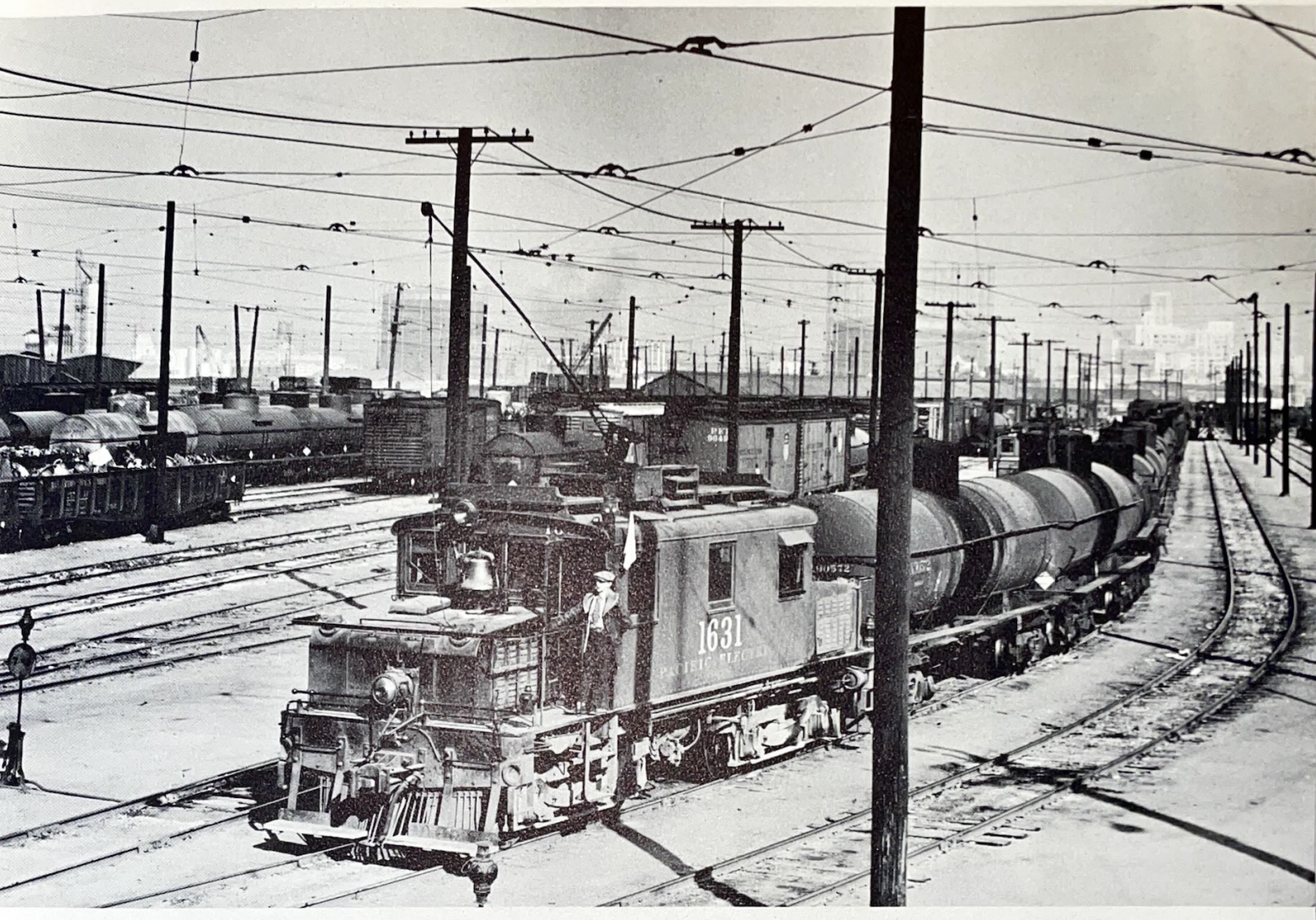
During the last days of PE passenger service, the Blimps from the San Francisco Bay Area comprised the total interurban fleet. Because of the large capacity per car, these "Blimps" as the trainmen called them, replaced the smaller, yet faster PE standard equipment. During 1947 all cars of this type were modernized . . . except for speed. *Above*: Boat train speeds back to Los Angeles after arrival of the Catalina steamer. Dolores way station is typical PE suburban stop. (*RIGHT*) A three-car special from the San Pedro line rolls over freshly ballasted track as it leaves Dominguez Junction for Los Angeles.

Above, A Bellflower train passes a Watts local and crosses the Santa Monica Air Line at Amoco Junction on its way to Watts. Amoco tower handles movements into Butte Street yard and operates the four track main line at this point. (Below), Blimp crosses a long trestled estuary on its way from Wilmington bascule bridge to the edge of the San Pedro yard. This stretch of track is the shorter of two routes between Wilmington and San Pedro.



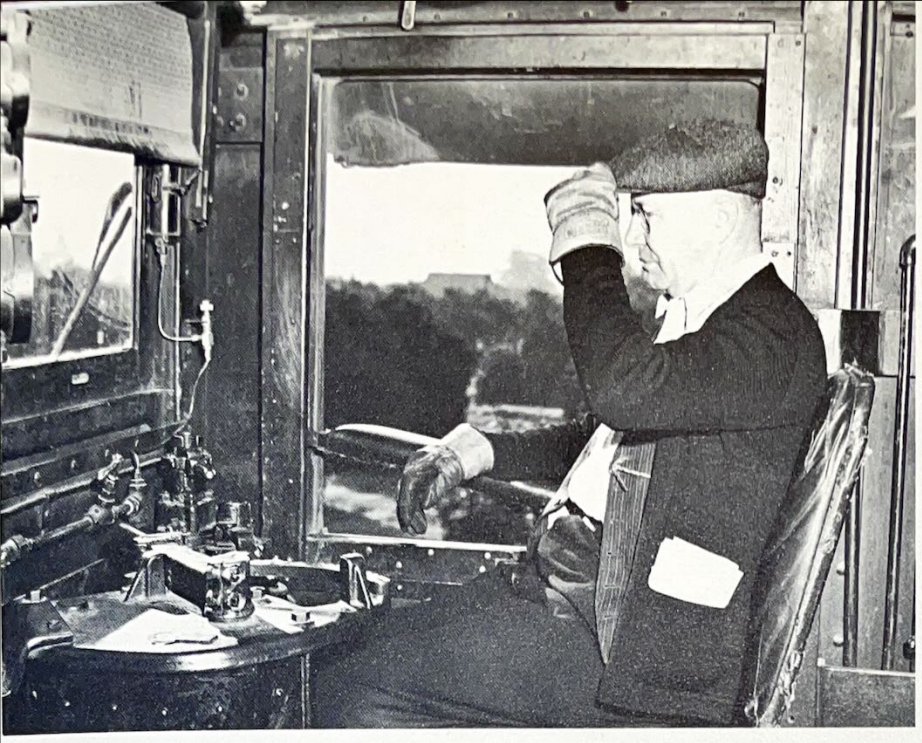
—All Donald Duke

Electric Fast Freight



—Donald Duke

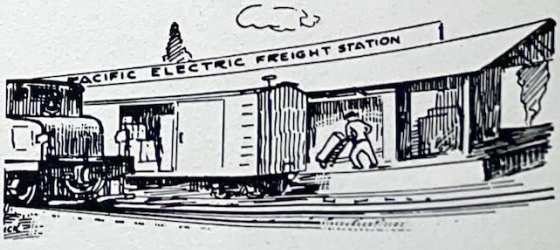
Pacific Electric's freight system is a highly important link in transcontinental freight operations. At present, PE handles about 170,000 carloads per year by 50 diesel locomotives. Of this amount, 37,000 carloads annually originate and terminate on PE lines. This places PE as the third largest California railroad in intra-state traffic with freight revenues of 14 million. Freight has always been an integral part in PE operations. With the completion of the Long Beach line in 1902, the first freight traffic was a carload of lumber for use in construction of a Long Beach high school. Carload freight is interchanged daily with transcontinental carriers thru PE's Butte and State St. yards in Los Angeles and yards in Colton and San Bernardino. PE also serves the harbors of Long Beach and Los Angeles expeditiously. Today Pacific Electric operates 363.85 miles of first main track, 68.83 miles of additional main track and 284.36 miles of yard track and sidings (including 170.20 miles of industrial spurs), for a total of 717.04 miles. *Above*: An electric locomotive switching a string of tanks in Butte Street yard.



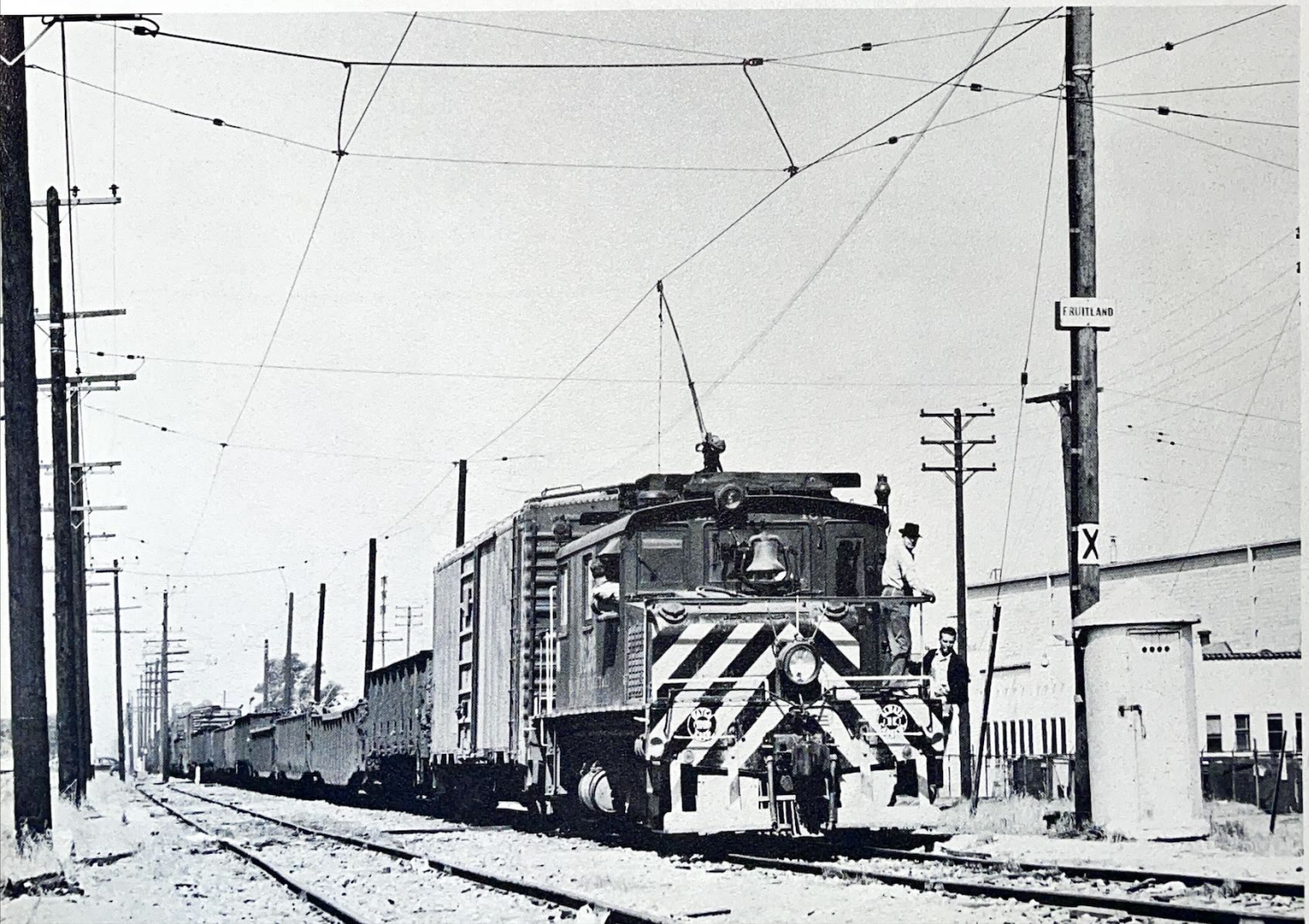
A Santa Monica bound freight halts at Talamantes Junction in wait for the West Hollywood local. Crew has cut the train to clear a crossing, while the brains checks his watch. In the photograph above, the hogger sits patiently awaiting the highball. On the opposite page, a doubleheader glides along the Torrance - El Segundo line with a string of empty tanks for the oceanside refineries.

—All Donald Duke

The four photographs on these two pages show Pacific Electric freight operations in a variety of aspects. The ubiquitous steeple-cab with a train of PFE refrigerator cars on the Santa Monica Air Line route near Palms station. At the left, a doubleheader sits in a Culver City passing track, waiting for an extra westbound to pass. On the opposite page, a juice jack slows to resume switching duties along the industrial-lined Whittier line. *Above*: A typical interurban right of way. PE tripleheader squeals around a crooked right-of-way with a dispatch freight at Hawthorne.

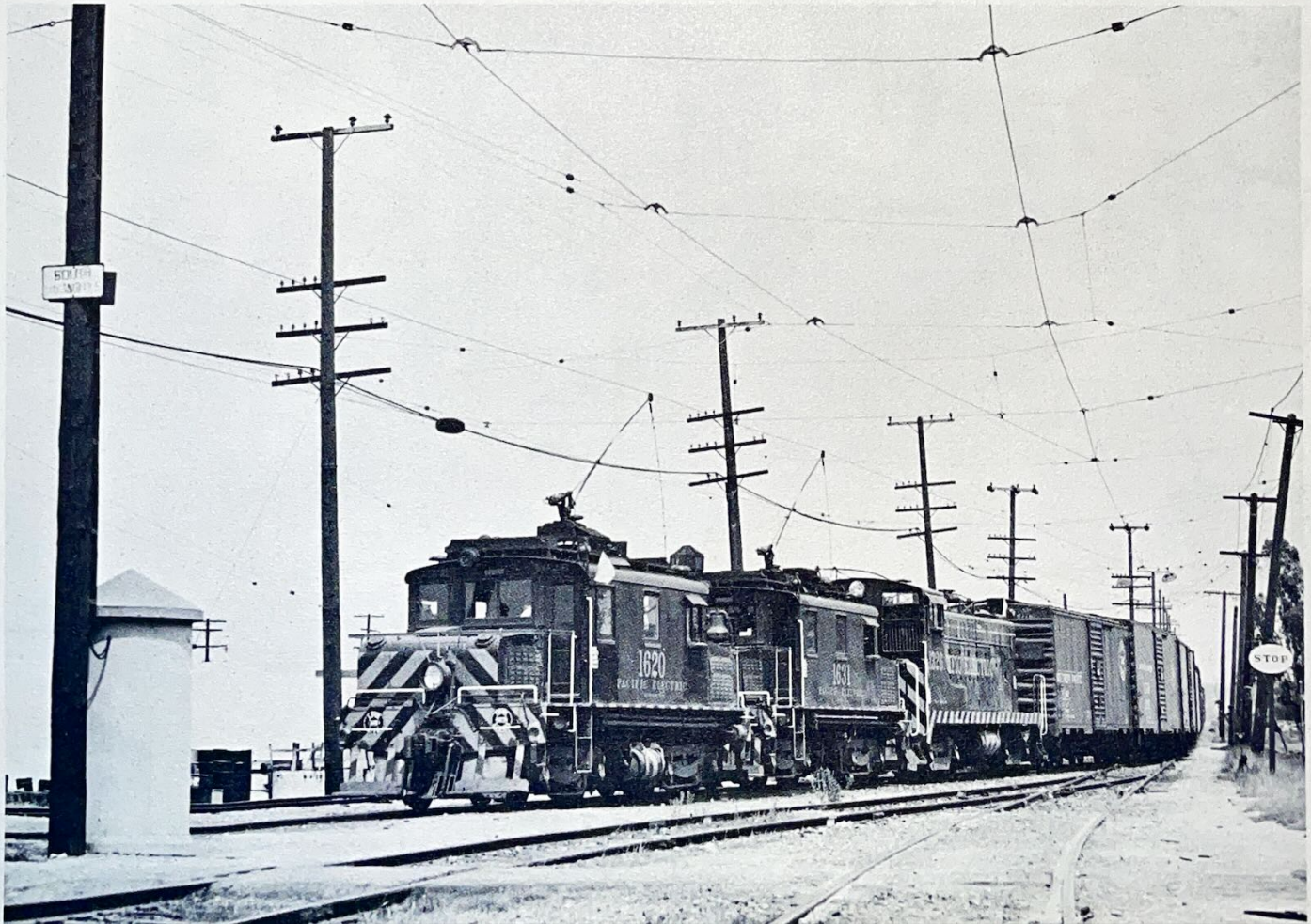


—All Donald Duke



The diesel takes over. Today the last electric hog awaits the torch, yesterday it was not uncommon to see diesels making inroads on all freight drags. *Below*: Three diesels and an electric cross the Santa Fe harbor branch at Slauson Tower. Note the trolley on the diesel used to actuate signals. *Above*: One of the converted gas rail cars secured during World War II from the Northwestern Pacific to help with wartime traffic. Opposite *Above*: A typical scene on the four track Southern District. *Below*: A westbound El Segundo freight clears South Los Angeles junction.

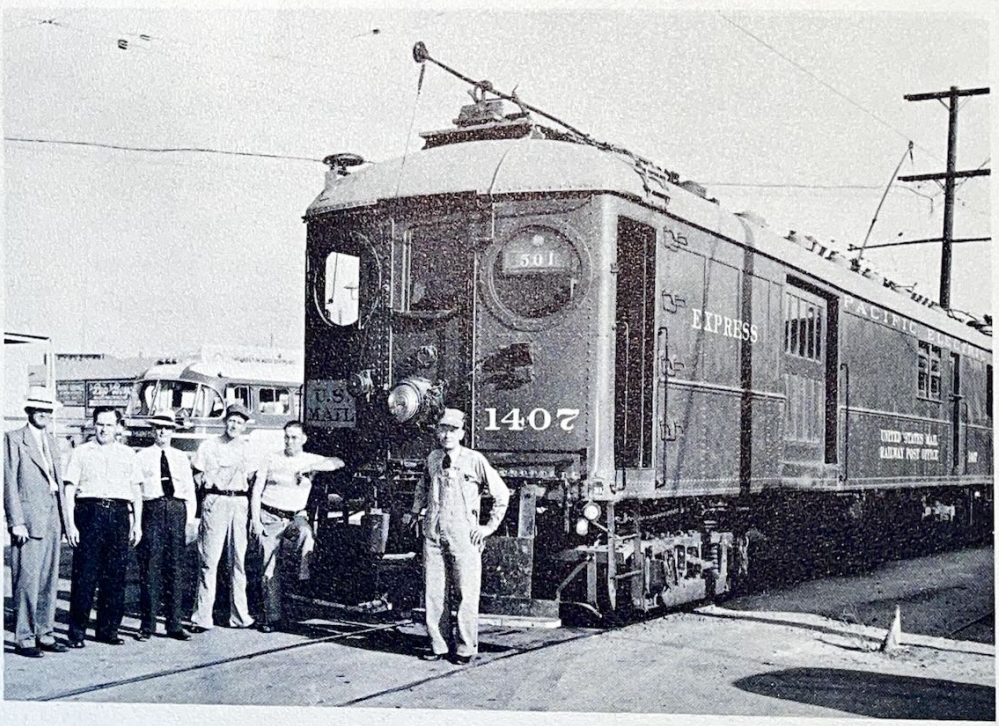
DIESEL INVASION


1620
STOP

LESS THAN CAR LOAD FREIGHT

—Donald Duke

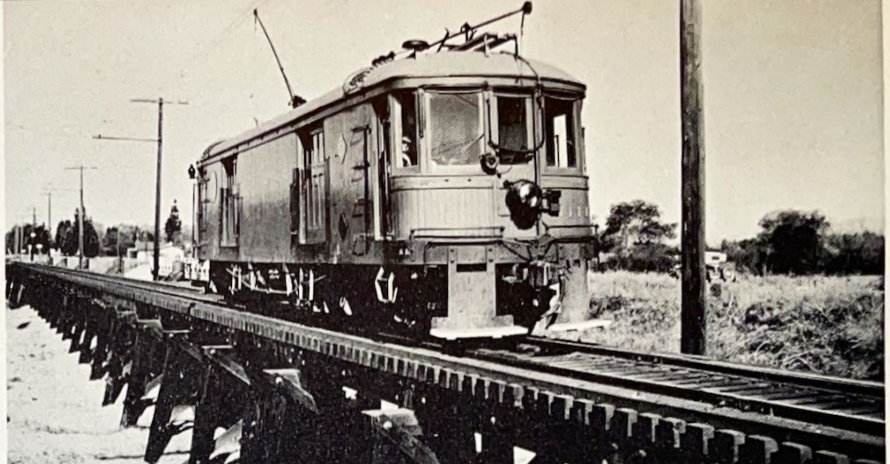
For the expeditious handling of LCL freight, Railway Express and U.S. Mail, Pacific Electric operated a large fleet of box motors numbered in the 1400 series. These cars operated out of three main terminals: Eighth Street Yard, center of LCL activity; Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal, center of express activity; and the baggage and mail room at 6th & Main station, center of Railway Mail Service. PE inherited baggage-express service with the purchase of the Los Angeles & Pasadena Railway. As lines expanded, specially designed motorized express cars were purchased and older passenger cars rebuilt into box motors. PE's box motors served practically every Southern California community where PE tracks existed. Handling of U.S. Mail was always lucrative on PE. The first Railway Post Office began early in 1905 as the LA & Redondo R.P.O. Other R.P.O.'s were established and by 1945, PE carried 400,000 sacks of mail in one month on 52 passenger, 14 express and 39 bus trips. As late as 1947, the Los Angeles-San Bernardino R.P.O. service was established and became the sole remaining trolley R.P.O. service in the USA. On May 6, 1950, this service was cut, while the last day of express service by box motor soon followed on November 15, 1952. On the opposite page, once upon a time these owl faced express cars lurked in the shadows of 8th Street Yard and the sky was full of trolley poles, wires and sparks. (*Above*) PE seldom hauled more than one freight car behind a box motor due to a full crew law; however, these motors could handle several loads.



—Pacific Electric Railway

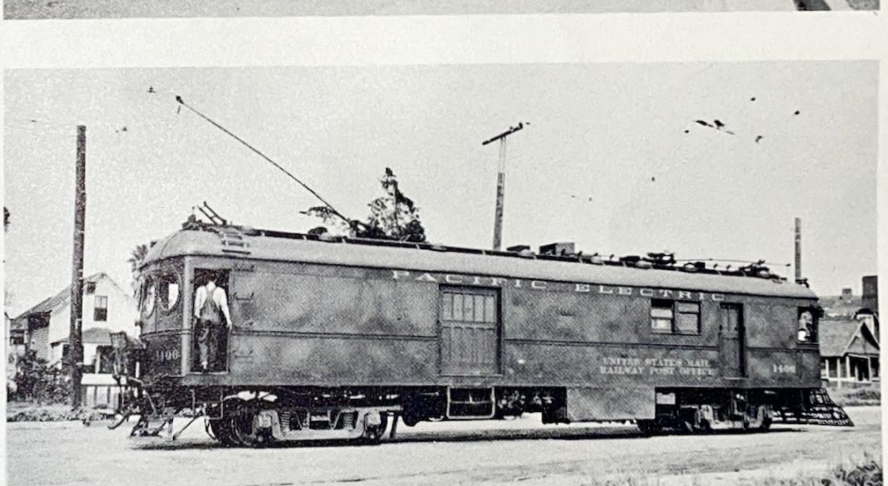
You couldn't board a Pacific Electric passenger train at the Los Angeles Union Station, but express shipments from soup to refrigerators were dispatched around the clock. The above picture shows practically every type box motor in use at that time. *BELOW*: Sad faces pose for the camera on the last day of service for the Los Angeles — San Bernardino R.P.O.

A high percentage of PE's less than carload freight was handled by these wooden motors built around 1910 in PE's own shops. Motor 1444 crosses a wash on the Van Nuys Line.



A clear April afternoon in 1939 finds box motor 1451 entering San Bernardino streets bound for the freight terminal.

In 1936, this Long Beach R.P.O. pauses to align switches before heading back to L.A. Note the car is clad with the awkward eclipse fenders used at the time.

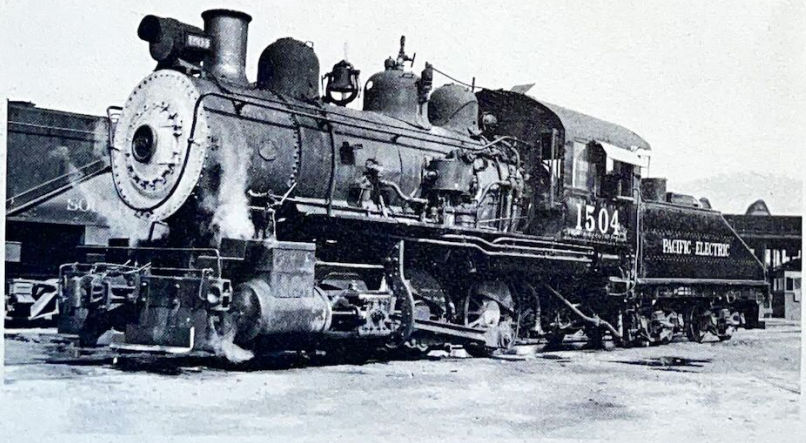


Sixty three feet of box motor glides into Sierra Vista on the Northern District. Two such cars were hand-me-downs from SP Bay Area operations.

—All Charles D. Savage

STEAM

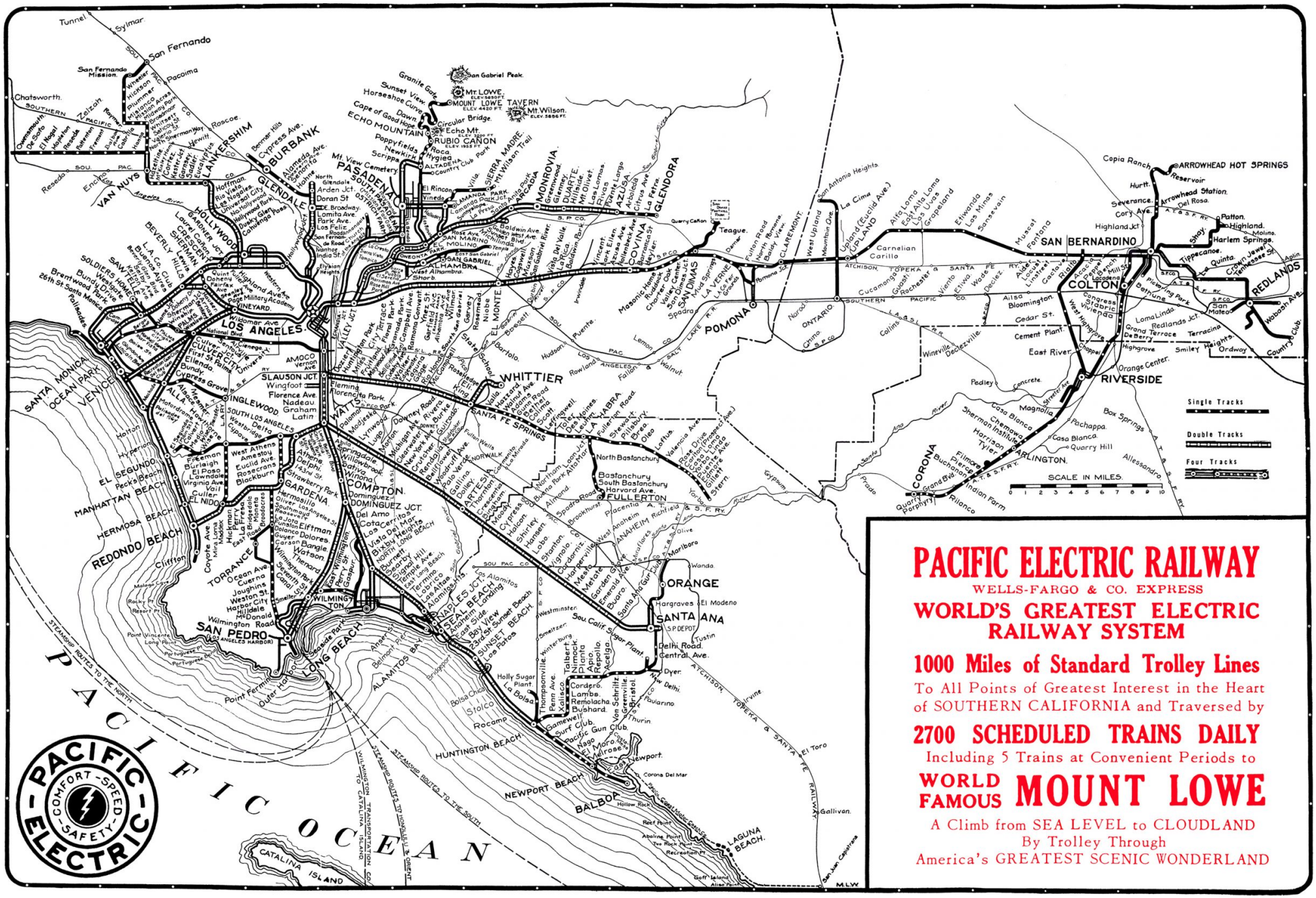
—All Donald Duke



The sight of a steam locomotive on the electrified Pacific Electric is really not such an oddity. PE owned two 4-4-0 type locomotives, leased many others from the parent system. At times, leased locomotives were renumbered and lettered PACIFIC ELECTRIC. Common garden variety of power was the 0-6-0 type and primarily used on industrial spurs. When wartime traffic became heavy, SP diverted much traffic to PE. The LA-San Bernardino trackage became a second main line for SP. Being faced with a motive power shortage, PE asked SP for a loan of steam power. Before long it was common practice to doublehead steam and electric power. Problems arose with steam, especially the running through downtown areas. At war's end, freight returned to the reliable juice hog.

In San Bernardino, the main line traverses a residential street before reaching the private right of way, while (*below*) a wartime freight drag speeds under the 1200 volt catenary on the LA — San Bernardino Line. Above *Opposite*: A freight rolls through vineyards near Fontana during heyday of steam-electric operations. Steam never operated alone due to trolley operated signals. (*Below Opposite*) a typical PE 0-6-0 switcher.

LINES OF THE PACIFIC ELECTRIC RAILWAY IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



1926 Pacific Electric System Map Courtesy PERyhs.org

PE